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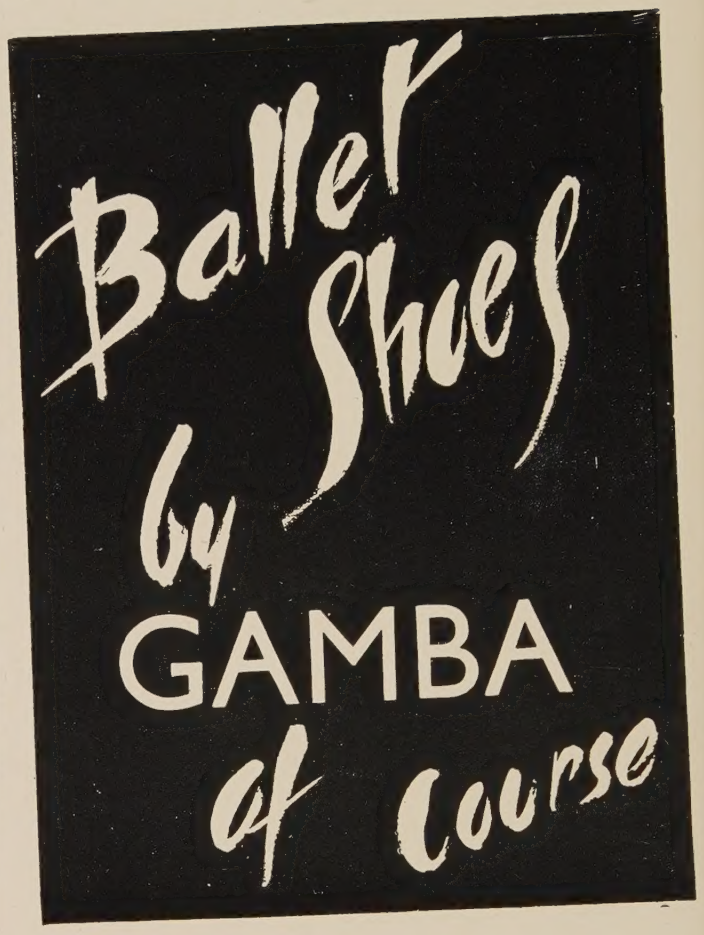

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Personality of the month

Photographed by Paul Wilson

WALTER GORE

Reason: For being an even better Rake than when he created the role 17 years ago.

IT becomes even more obvious that certain roles need mature artists and that their presence is essential in young companies. Walter Gore's guest appearances in *The Rake's Progress* with the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet underlined this fact.

17 years ago Ninette de Valois created a ballet which has now become an early milestone in British ballet history. The title role, then played by Gore, is almost a male Giselle. Many artists have since played it with certain success but it was not until Gore returned on December 10 that today's audience got the true idea of the many subtleties and sense of style required.

The secret of good characterisation and mime is economy. There should be no fussy, unnecessary or muddled gesture. In this way Gore brings his Rake alive. In the opening scene he had weak charm; just the sort of person to be duped by the parasites around him. In the brothel he was at home, not just a dancer playing lechery; any resistance he might ever have put up to his surroundings had vanished. His complete decay in Bedlam was tragic, every vestige of feeling had long since left his broken body. His death-fall came suddenly, different to the complicated Nijinsky-*Scheherazade* protracted twist we have become accustomed to. A most distinguished performance in every way.

Hilarion

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover of Moira Shearer in *Giselle* Act II is by Maurice Seymour.

ON February 7, Shearer returns as guest ballerina to Covent Garden after an absence of nearly two years. Born in Dunfermline, Fifeshire, in 1926. she studied in Rhodesia from 1932 and in London with Flora Fairbairn and Nicolaeva-Legat from 1936. Joined Sadler's Wells School in 1940. Made her debut with International Ballet in 1941. Re-joined Sadler's Wells in 1942. Danced all the leading roles with the company. Appeared in the *Red Shoes* film in 1948 and *The Tales of Hoffman* in 1951.

The international stars on the back cover are Igor Youskevitch and Alicia Alonso of American Ballet Theatre in Black Swan. Photograph also by Maurice Seymour.

YOUSKEVITCH was born in Russia in 1912. Attended the Belgrade Royal University. Was mainly interested in athletics. Took up dancing in 1932 and gave performances in Paris in 1933. Studied with Preobrajenska. Was principal dancer in Col. de Basil company and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. In U.S. Navy 1944-5. Joined Ballet Theatre 1946.

ALONSO was born in Havana. Studied there with Sociedad Pro-Arte Musical. Later with Fedorova, American School of Ballet, and Vilzak in New York. With Ballet Theatre since 1943 and is now prima ballerina. Also has own company.

February 1953 Vol. 4 No. 2

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS

Assistant Editors: CLIVE BARNES DAVID RAHER

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FULL-LENGTH WORKS ONLY?

THE new production of *Le Lac des Cygnes* at Covent Garden may have a far greater effect on the future of ballet in Europe than could ever have been visualised when the revival was first discussed. Each performance has been sold out for the season, regardless of who was dancing the principal roles. This would seem to prove that the audience is anxious to see the ballet rather than any particular star.

Since the war it has been the continual moan of the old guard that today's audiences only want stars. If this moaning is justified, and there is no doubt that to a certain extent it is, then it looks as though the approach to ballet is now taking a turn for the better. It also brings up the question of whether the full-length ballet has come to stay, for the next decade at least.

Looking at public reaction to the various types of programme offered over the past two years it would seem that the old three-ballets-an-evening programme, if not doomed, was definitely on the decline. Programmes of short ballets at Covent Garden rarely hang 'em on the rafters. Whereas only early birds are certain of seats for *Sleeping Beauty, Le Lac des Cygnes, Cinderella, Sylvia* or *Giselle*. Late birds have to view these masterpieces from behind a pillar or some elaborate millinery—and from an upright position at that.

The new *Lac* has surely set the seal on the future of ballet. It has also, we hope, signed the death warrant on the continuance of that abominable practice of raping single acts, or pot-pourries, from full-length classics and presenting them as a single act in digest form.

Now we know that this particular work can be a magnificent whole, the audience should not tolerate any form of mutilation. No opera audience would stand for, or sit for, single acts of *La Boheme, Othello*, or *Tristan and Isolde*—not for one second would they. So why should there be any leniency towards those who destroy *Le Lac des Cygnes* or *Sleeping Beauty* with their sordid cheese-paring spectacles.

It has been said that these truncated versions serve as a trial ground for Miss X and Mr. Y, that they are also a fine vehicle for great ballerinas (unable to negotiate all the acts) to display their undoubted artistry in the easiest way possible.

I am sorry to disagree but I consider that Miss X and Mr. Y should try their paces in the confines of the rehearsal-room or at a half-price matinee. If a great ballerina cannot get through all the acts of any particular work, then she should only attempt something she can do. Why everybody entitled to be called a ballerina should be expected to shine in every classic is one of those modern theories that are hard to fathom.

To dance the principal role in a great classic should be the highest honour and the peak of a dancer's career, it should never be a means of launching some promising soloist. These roles are the rare prizes to be awarded for a lifetime of stress, strain and devotion.

It might seem from this that we are about to embark on an era similar to the one which Diaghilev and Fokine revolted against. This need not necessarily be the case. There is no reason why our many distinguished choreographers should not create full-length masterpieces. I can hear you muttering about the enormous costs and the big risks involved. These things are admittedly always present, but does it cost more to put on a three-act ballet than three one-act ones? No, of course not. As regards to the risk, then it will merely mean that there will have to be less of this mad rushing into works that have faint hope of success from the outset.

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HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

Produced by Samuel Goldwyn; Directed by Charles Vidor; Lyrics and music by Frank Loesser; Choreography by Roland Petit; Ballet costumes and decors by Clavé.

Principal dancers:
RENÉE JEANMAIRE, ROLAND PETIT and ERIK BRUHN

"ANY similarity to actual persons living or dead, or actual events or firms is purely coincidental," says the blurb. And very necessary words they are because any relationship between the great story-teller from Odense and the person depicted by Danny Kaye is non-existent. It therefore seems strange that the film should be titled as it is—*Song of Denmark* would have been far more apt.

Treated purely as a musical and nothing else, the film is full of charm. Danny Kaye gives a quiet and tender performance of Hans Andersen, which is one of the best things he has ever done. Apart from this performance and some naive and catchy tunes, the main interest is in the ballet.

As the ballerina with whom Hans Andersen falls in love, Jeanmaire acts in the same careful manner that French ballerinas seem to adopt when projected into a Hollywood film—carefully enunciated broken-English. For a brief moment, at the end, she is moving.

Her dancing seems to have been carefully enunciated as well. Gone is the fire of Carmen. Hard to imagine that she was a dancer who, only a few years ago, had Europe at her feet. Yet under the streamlining the old Jeanmaire still, from time to time, shows through.

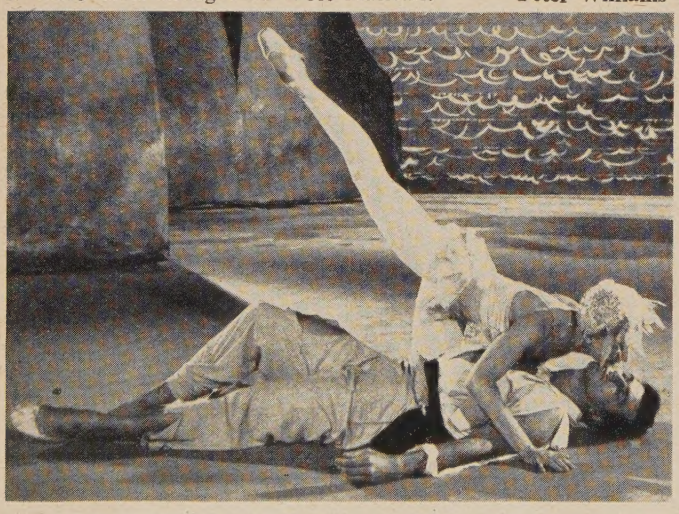
Roland Petit has created two ballets and one dream sequence. The first, a most undistinguished skating affair to Schubert music, is only saved by some lovely designs by Clavé. The decor is a pastel exterior with a certain amount of black for accent and his usual conglomeration of slightly irrelevant objects which give his settings a personal quality. The tutus of black and pale-coloured net were unmistakably French and *chic*. Partnering very well and therefore unnoticed, Erik Bruhn as a Hussar made his only appearance.

The big ballet, yet another version of *The Little Mermaid*, used a lot of unsuitable Liszt music. The opening, with limbs of mermaids appearing over the waves, was heartbreakingly reminiscent of the Europa episode in Petit's lovely *Les Amours de Jupiter*. The underwater scenes of waving green and blue chiffon were beautiful, particularly where the Mermaid (Jeanmaire) goes to the witches of the sea. Transformed into a mortal the Mermaid seeks her Prince at a ball; startlingly effective in black and white with blood-red boxes surrounding the dance floor. The male guests are in black and the girls in white.

It was in this scene that the most inventive choreography occurred for Petit and Jeanmaire in a *pas de deux*. Yet it was very similar to Petit's previous work in *Les Demoiselles de la Nuit*. He looked noble and it was a pity that he did not dance more.

These French dancers need personal contact with their audience, only obtained in the live theatre. Having to conform to the dictates of the cinema makes them look like fish cast upon the shore—still beautiful, but foundering. In spite of these faults, the film is more entertaining than most musicals.

Peter Williams

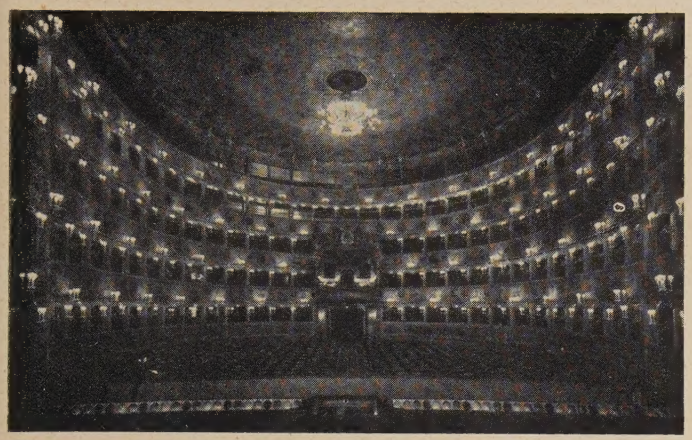


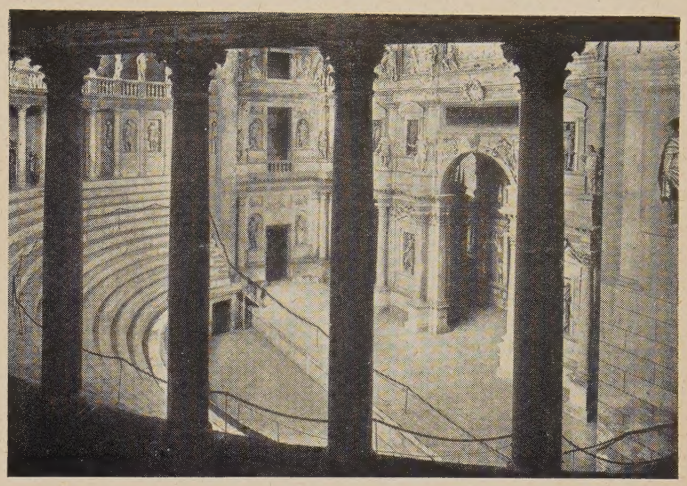
Jeanmaire being lifted by four men in the skating ballet.

Jeanmaire and Petit in a pas de deux *at the ball where the transformed Mermaid comes to seek the Prince she saved from drowning.*

Left. The Mermaid (Jeanmaire) falls in love with the Prince (Roland Petit) whom she has saved from drowning.

Photos by Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.





Two beautiful Italian theatres. (Above) Il Teatro La Fenice in Venice. (Right) Palladio's Teatro Olimpico in Vicenzo built in 1580.

15 minutes overshadow tour of Italy

by ANTON DOLIN

IN the space of 15 minutes, the tour of Italy, the success, the worries, the coping with a language which, alas, I cannot speak, read or write with any degree of intelligence, faded into insignificance.

The wonderful sight of the San Carlo Opera House in Naples filled to overflowing with an elegant and perfumed audience, an orchestra of 125 that almost sang melodiously the music of Tchaikovsky and Strauss on the opening night.

Then Venice. The Feniche Theatre. Arriving, if one wished, at the stage door by gondola. The quiet atmosphere of the streets leading to the theatre, the contrast of the excitement inside, elegant gendarmes in their richly coloured uniforms, the gold and red curtains that opened as though under the power of the flunkeys again in their splendid livery.

The unique performance in the Theatro Olympico in Vincenza. There, against a permanent decor in classical style, marble in appearance but actually manufactured in wood, we danced *Les Sylphides*, *Pas de Quatre*, *Bolero* and *Beau Danube*. The public of Modena, Bielo, Palma, each with an equally lovely theatre, welcomed us and filled their elegant opera house at every performance. In Palma, the ballerinas and ballet mistress of the famed Scala of Milano came to visit us—Ballerina Madam Novarra and the Ballet Mistress Miss Esme Bulness. On to Turino, where enthusiasm was no longer restricted, but let itself be heard unrestrainedly.

I forgot my 24 hours rushed visit to London, my two days in Paris to witness my ballet, *Pas de Quatre*, brilliantly danced.

I forgot the Marquis de Cuevas, who rightly was more than cross, and who was in no way hiding his feelings. The orchestra played the wrong variation and left George Skibine during *Swan Lake* no alternative but to retire to the wings, leaving the audience slightly bewildered as to why they were being treated to a short musical interlude in the middle of the ballet.

I forgot the most uncomfortable journey from Paris to Milano and on to Florence to rejoin my company. There, after a week's rest for the artists, the Teatro Verdi was to open its doors to Festival Ballet. A lovely theatre but the wrong one for ballet.

I love Florence, but though I shall never forget, could never forget, this divine city, I am happy to forget the Teatro Verdi. Not so the Bellinis and their magnificent villa.

To Rome, to the Theatre Quatro Fontana. The opening night was elegant, brilliant, and graced by the British Ambassador, Sir Victor Mallet and Lady Mallet. The orchestra was bad, it was not the fault of the dancers that the opening night's performance on the stage somehow missed fire. I sensed a feeling of strange antagonism. We were not a revue, not a night club attraction. And somehow in this theatre, clean, attractive as it is, it was more this form of entertainment they had been accustomed to. Preceding us there had been Katherine Dunham with her very specialised form of ballet revue for a few nights, and the dancers Rosario and Antonio. The audience were not exactly in too harmonious a mood for reasons of their own. But the orchestra. I will say no more, except to say we lived the opening night discords down and with our second programme the company could justly claim a success.

Would that it had been possible to stay on and end up our tour of Italy in Milano. But it was not possible. Nor did I, after the mistake of a wrong theatre in Rome, want any thing but the best in Milano. And the best is La Scala, where we have been invited to appear during this year. I know this whole article should have been devoted to that great and wonderful theatre. Alas, it must wait. For though it was my pleasure and privilege to have seen a class of Miss Esme Bulness, to have talked with both Milloss and Margaret Walmann, I was not able to return to Milan and witness rehearsals of their respective works for the coming season and so be able to write about them, nor the work and running of the famous school.

No, for me and for many others, the wonderful tour of Italy faded into insignificance and oblivion with 15 minutes that will live in my memory always, 15 minutes when The Festival Ballet were received in audience by H.H. The Pope. What can I write of those precious minutes? Only this. His Holiness Pope Pius told us of his happy remembrances of London upon his last visit during the year of 1911 for the Coronation of H.M. George V. That through His Holiness I was asked to convey, first to our beloved patroness Her Highness Princess Marie Louise his blessings and blessings to all English dancers.

These words of his must be remembered in this exciting year that lies ahead of us.

Anton Dolin receiving instructions before the audience with H.H. The Pope. Members of Festival Ballet are assembled outside the Summer Palace. *Photo: Di Curzio.*

My ballet, Rodeo

Time: Events leading up to October 16, 1942. Place: Metropolitan Opera House, New York City. Principal Characters: Agnes de Mille, the last instalment of whose autobiography *Dance to the Piper* **(Hamish Hamilton, 18/-) this is—Her Mother—Frederic Franklin—Leonide Massine—Mrs. Massine—Alexandra Danilova—Nathalie Krassovska—Members of Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.**

by AGNES DE MILLE

JULY moved into August, August into September. The United States lost the Aleutians. Rommel had all but reached the Nile, the Japanese were hard upon New Zealand. We knitted and rehearsed and gossiped back across the continent in cars that were shunted aside to let trainloads of tanks take the right of way, and trainloads of men, some in uniform, but all with intent lost faces. In New York we settled to three weeks of straight rehearsing, six hours a day. At night I prepared the final plans.

In the morning I screamed for three hours at the Russians to shut up and be simple, and in the afternoon I screamed for three more hours to be quiet and be simple. We finished the ballet in ten days.

"Now," I said turning to the dancers, "we will really get to work." But the room was empty. They had left on their vacation.

Since I was to dance the *premiére*, I used the time to brush up on my own dancing. I had practised every night with them before performances and they were considerably alarmed. Before God, I was no technician. I shut myself in a studio and laboured on the comedy.

The company reassembled three weeks later. Massine was about. Because of overlapping contracts he found himself the husband of both groups. Ballet Theatre was housed also in the Metropolitan and their two-week season preceded ours. The two companies of dancers passed one another on stairs, in dressing-rooms, rehearsal halls, lavatories, with the chill reserve and uncommunicative politeness of enemy officers about to join issue in a contest for survival. The following season they were most of them working for the opposite group and passed their former bedmates with the same hostile condescension.

This behaviour is a ballet tradition as old as the five positions and dates from the time when the French despised the Italians and both decried the Russians and Danish. Even within Russia, there has always been ugly feeling between the Moscow and St. Petersburg schools, and considering that the dancers always ended up in the same theatre, it made for a liveliness of atmosphere.

We rehearsed upstairs at night while they went through their repertoire below.

Our season began. The same audience returned in the same evening clothes. One noted the same cheering, the same lining-up on the lobby stairs to see who had come, the same promenading of dress and manner and presence, the same greetings, the same wandering, inattentive eyes, the same drinking away of half the ballets in Sherry's bar by the real initiates, to wit: Mr. Hurok and his weary staff.

During the American season one half the group murmured praise, the other half scorn—the parts were reversed the next week. It made no great matter. It all happened between dinner and supper. Difference may have been noted by the people who were there because they loved dancing. Their opinion has always been less conspicuously expressed. But the young men prowling at the back of the auditorium, including the youth with spangles in his hair, were undisturbed. From their point of view nothing had changed.

I was spending a great deal of time at Karinska's—the costume executant—watching the fittings. Kermit Love, the designer, practically lived there. He said he stayed the nights too which is possible, though for what purpose I have yet to ascertain. He claimed he had the pants dyed and dried on his own legs so that they would look sun-faded and worn.

On Monday before the opening we showed the ballet to Aaron Copland and I, not Lubov Roudenko, for the first time danced. Massine practised a barre at the back of the room throughout. He had no more business in that room than Lucia Chase, but bald curiosity compelled him to stay. Deakin came up to me at start and whispered, "I see Bela Lugosi in fourth position back there." I didn't mind. I had so grown in confidence I didn't mind. There were only five guests but there was a small ovation at the end. Massine came to the front of the room without comment to take charge of the next rehearsal, his *Rouge et Noire*. He sat on a chair with his back to the mirror.

During the hoe-down I had kicked off one of my slippers, and it had shot under the chair on which he was sitting. To retrieve it I had to get down on my hands and knees and fumble long-armed behind his feet. He did not move. He looked down at me with his staring enormous expressionless eyes. "I see you have done a lively ballet!"

"Haven't I?" I said, wiping the dirt off my hands and straightening up. "Yes, I think maybe I have."

Rehearsal with sets

We had an orchestra reading. Aaron Copland sat in the front row. I sat beside him until about the twelfth bar; then I shot up and down the aisle. The cleaning women wiping the red velvet seats stood up now and then to listen. Some of the dancers came to the crack of the great gold curtain to hear what their cues sounded like on the instruments.

Then, the afternoon of the opening, we had dress rehearsal. That is, the scenery was up, Oliver's lovely sets. Because of union prices we only had one hour. There was no time to figure out entrances or exits or spaces. But those surprising ballet dancers figured everything for themselves. This was the moment experience paid off. They solved on the instant every spatial and direction problem.

I kept all my entire wits on myself and my own performance. Out in the red velvet auditorium in the endless scallops of empty seats sat Denham and Libidins and apart, very small and alone in a black tricorne, sat Mother.

I believe I didn't eat.

I was in the theatre at six. I shared a star dressing-room with Nathalie Krassovska. I had my costumes because I had personally gone to Karinska's and taken them away. I checked over every detail—bow, boots, belt, hat—again and again. Only two costumes this time, not fourteen. I did a careful barre. I put on my make-up.

And then who should come into my dressing-room and sink into the armchair but Mrs. Massine. She conversed with Krassovska in Russian, but as I stripped and redressed, she cast long appraising looks at my body. And she was a great beauty with the elegance and arrogance of a woman who has known since girlhood that things would come easily to her.

Kermit Love appeared pallidly in the door. "I'm so distressed," he sighed.

"Why?"

He hesitated. "They have made the collar to Milada's dress badly and you know how prettily I designed it."

"Oh, Kermit, for God's sake."

He faded away. Kermit lied like a gentleman.

—but no clothes

There was not a costume in the house, Milada's or anyone's. It was a tradition of Karinska that her clothes arrive piecemeal in a flotilla of taxis during the evening, some still with bastings and pins, and a half score of seamstresses in attendance to do last-minute sewing on dancers in the wings. The clothes were worn without trial of any sort.

It is a tribute to her expertness that no accidents ever resulted. The wear and tear on the cast's nerves was, however, simply dreadful. Karinska has executed three ballets of mine. I have never had anything like complete costumes at the dress rehearsal. Why does anyone hire her a second time? Simply, she is without peer in her field.

Mrs. Massine did not stop talking for a minute. On and on and on she chattered. In Russian, thank God, but noisily. I had only a few minutes to make my peace with heaven. *Rouge et Noir* had been on for a quarter-hour. I stepped to the door partly dressed. Danilova beckoned me across the hall. "Agnes, I can help you with your hair. I will show you how to fix so it not come loose. These little secrets I learn through many years." She sat me at her dressing-table and got to work with pins in her mouth. On the night of my debut Alexandra Danilova maided me—hairnets, barrettes, bobbies, elastics and ribbons.

Rouge et Noir was over. I went back to my room. Mrs. Massine raised languid amused eyes to my taut face. "Are you nairvous?" she drawled.

"I am," I said. "I am sick at my stomach."

"Good luck! Success!" she said punctiliously.

I turned to her quietly. "I hope we have success. The success or failure of my life depends on the next half-hour. And I hope, for the company's sake, there is success. Much depends on this ballet for them, too. If I have failed them they are in a bad way. And they have worked hard, harder than you can imagine."

Under the facade Mrs. Massine, like most people, has a heart. She was confounded. "As you say," she murmured, "for all—success."

I walked onto the stage. Everyone I knew was out front. Mother had seen to that. She herself was in a box in black lace. Beside her sat Mary Meyer and Edward Johnson and Margaret. The refugee German of the violets and Martha Graham and Mary Hunter were there, and, although I didn't know it until later, John Andrews from the Rambert Company, now an officer in His Majesty's Navy, with six of the staff of his corvette. They made a fine blue and gold effect in a box complete with a bunch of red roses. And in another box, not by accident, sat Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein II and Theresa Helburn of the Theatre Guild. I had heard

they were contemplating a play on Western cowboy life and I thought I could do good dances for them.

Mother alone was not nervous. "This is the first time I have not had to worry about the box office," she said serenely. "And I didn't have to spend the afternoon trying to impress my friends into coming."

The house was sold out.

Behind the gold curtain we stood in our cowboy pants, I among my men, nearly every one of whom has since become an import nt soloist. Beside Franklin stood Harold Lang, Casimir Kokic, James Starbuck, Robert Pagent, and David Thimar, and waiting in the wings for a walk-on was Maria Tallchief, and beside her Betty Low, Dorothy Etheridge, Milada Mladova, and Vladimir Kostenko, who was to play Jud in the *Oklahoma*! ballet for six years. We were in our pants because the Karinska cabs had begun to arrive filled with hysterical seamstresses and pins. There was a great rustling of tissue paper in the wings. On one side flowers were being unwrapped, on the other, dresses and hats no one had ever seen. There was also a great deal of whispering as to who was to put on what.

Behind every piece of scenery the company in tights and dressing-gowns crouched watching, head on head, with painted and elongated eyes like the larvae of insects. On folding chairs behind the tormentor sat Danilova and Slavenska, crossing themselves, spitting, and looking on me with shining eyes. Franz Allers, the conductor, kissed me. "Here we go, Malenkya," said Libidins. "Ham and eggs!"

Denham gave his blessing.

We're off!

"I'm going in," said Allers, and he left to enter the pit.

Freddie spat over my shoulder and bumped his knee against my rump. He didn't say anything. He was tightening his belt and figuring out the spacing within the new set. His eyes darted back and forth. I moistened my lips. This was a terrible moment, but I had company. I was no longer alone. There were men standing all around me—very great dancers. I looked at their thighs and their shoulders and the intensity of their faces, and I knew I would never again be alone.

The large descending octaves sounded from the brass, sharp as sunlight on rocks. We flexed our insteps and breathed deep. The gold folds contracted. The music was suddenly clear under our feet. The naked, living dark yawned.

"This is it, kids," said Freddie, without moving his lips.

If it is possible for a life to change at one given moment, if it is possible for all movement, growth, and accumulated power to become apparent at one single point, then my hour struck at 9.40, 16 October, 1942. Chewing gum, squinting under a Texas hat, I turned to face what I had been preparing for the whole of my life.

This was not a great performance; we gave better later. Neither was it a great ballet. The style, as I always feared, did break. But it was the first of its kind, and the moment was quick with birth.

There was applause on my first exit. An unexpected bonus. There was applause or response on every phase. Did the audience laugh on count eight as I had promised in July in California? They laughed, not just female titters, but real laughing with the sound of men's voices, and the laugh turned into handclapping. This happened again and again. The dancers were elated but not surprised. I had promised them laughs. The pantomime was spaced to accommodate them.

There were mishaps. At one point, Kokic grew confused with his new costumes and failed to make an entrance, leaving me to improvise a love scene, without partner, alone, and exposed for sixty-four bars of music on the Met stage. Lines were crooked. Some of the girls clapped off beat. It didn't seem to matter.

The pace of the performance rushed us like a wind. The audience were roused and urging us on. Great exchanges of excitement and force and gaiety were taking place all around. The dancers rushed and whirled, grabbing the right person, because the right person was there, though unrecognisable in an unexpected dress and hair-do.

And throughout the pace which was too quick for me, beyond my understanding, faster than could be savoured or appreciated, was Freddie's hand, Freddie's arm, Freddie's strong back, propelling, pushing, carrying, and Freddie's feet like bullets on the wood. It was beyond endurance. It was beyond help. It was slipping away too fast, too fast. Also my collar was too tight.

"Freddie," I said at the back of the stage, "I'm fainting. Loosen my collar."

"No time, duckie. Here we go."

The straight, and home

And as though we were blown out of the mouth of a gun, he propelled me to the footlights. We separated. Bob, bob. (Which Robert, madame?) All the trumpets and horns threw their shafts between us. We hung on the brink. The music tore open. We rushed. We clashed. We were lifted. And all the girls had faces like stars with their hair dropping over the boy's shoulders. The great curtain fell.

There was dust in my nostrils from the dusty lining of the curtain. It was over. It was done. And I had made so many foolish mistakes. So many hasty things gone wrong. Once more I had been incapable of the perfect effort. "Oh, Freddie," I said gasping, "what a stinking, lousy performance. We must rehearse like demons tomorrow."

I looked at him wistfully but we were walking forward and we were all holding hands and bowing. A large bunch of American corn was put in my arms tied with red, white and blue ribbons. More flowers came, more flowers. The Russians did things this way. They also clapped and called out. Hadn't I stood grinding my teeth at the back of the house for years while they cheered bogus nonsense? We bowed and bowed. At the eighth bow, I looked into the pit. The fiddlers were beating their bows on their instruments. The others were standing up yelling. No one gets the union boys to do this easily. I looked at Freddie in amazement. "Freddie," I said, "this is not a claque. This is not Libidins's contriving."

"Darling, darling," said Freddie, kissing me, "this is an ovation. This is the real thing. Take it." He pushed me forward, and all the company backed away to the edge of the stage and stood there clapping.

We had twenty-two curtain calls.

The grips and members of the company helped me carry my flowers to the dressing-room. They filled half the floor space. The doorman could not hold my friends in check.

In the hall between the dressing-rooms, I met Massine. He bowed formally, and then apparently thought he must say something. He stared at me with his binocular eyes. "You have done a characteristic ballet." I struggled to follow this. "And in Europe I think it will have success." We bowed.

Mary Meyer sat at my dressing-table crying and crying. "I can't stop," she said, mopping her nose, "It isn't that this is the most wonderful ballet I've ever seen. I've seen better. It's just that I can't stand you making a success after all these years."

"Aren't you proud of her?" said the friends to Mother. And Annie drew herself up to their shoulders and looking at them steadily with her penetrating blue eyes answered, "I've always been proud of her. Always. When no one hired her. I'll go home now and start the coffee."

A recent photograph of John Kriza (in the role created by Franklin) and Jenny Workman in Agnes de Mille's Rodeo. *The work is now in the permanent repertoire of Ballet Theatre. It was first seen in London when Ballet Theatre came to Covent Garden in* 1950. *It scored an instant success with European audiences, a success which will probably be even greater when the company returns to Europe this year, owing to the present popularity of square dancing. Copland's music contains many square dance tunes and there is an actual running square dance in the ballet accompanied only by the voice of the Caller and the clapping hands of dancers, members of the orchestra and frequently the audience. Apart from Loring's* Billy the kid *and Littlefield's* Barn Dance, Rodeo *was one of the first successful ballets to use a theme which could only arise out of the continent of America. It has a great feeling of the wide open spaces to be found on a mid-Western ranch.*

Photo: Maurice Seymour.

ETUDES

First performed at the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, by the Royal Danish Ballet on January 15, 1948. First performance by the Paris Opéra Ballet at the Théâtre National de l'Opera on November 19, 1952.

Choreography, Harald Lander. Music, Knudage Riisager (based on Czerny studies). Decor and costumes, Moulene and Fost.

Principal dancers: MICHELINE BARDIN, MICHEL RENAULT, ALEXANDRE KALIOUJNY.

Photographed by Serge Lido

The corps de ballet *of the Paris Opera in the diagonal in the last part of Harald Lander's* Etudes.

LANDER'S *Etudes* (called *Etude* in Copenhagen) was generally considered to be his best work, both by the Danish and English ballet critics.

It was with some nervousness that the Danish public looked forward to the first performance of this work in Paris as it was the first time that a Danish choreographer had presented his own work on the stage of the famous Opéra.

The result was even better than in Copenhagen. The dancing was of a higher level, the costumes finer and the music wonderfully played. The few changes in the choreography benefited the work.

Only in two points did the Danish production seem better. The decor with its many mirrors and chandeliers was refused by the Opera because it was said to resemble a Parisian cafe; for some unknown reason the silhouette effect in the third scene did not materialise properly.

The ballet opens with five small girls making the five positions in front of their teacher (period 1880). This is followed by the steps which every dancer does daily at the *barre*. Then comes the silhouettes with two groups working on *port de bras*.

One group of girls is in black with small tutus and turban, the other in white. The men wear steel-grey tights with long sleeves. The two soloists (Renault and Kaliojny) are in light grey and white. The ballerina (Bardin) is in white.

In Denmark, this scene was followed by a blackout to be followed by the ballerina appearing stage-centre in a blaze of light. Usually she was dazzled for the first few minutes of her solo. In Paris, the lights come up slowly to reveal a group of girls, some kneeling, some standing. When the lights are fully up, the group forms into a star. Between this group, the men of the *corps de ballet* come on; the two male soloists from each side. All attention is therefore directed back-stage centre for the entrance of the ballerina.

This change makes a logical sequence leading up to the most important feature in any ballet—the ballerina. She enters, brilliant in white with a sparkling tiara, smiling graciously; her position assured.

After a short solo she returns and dances a mirror dance in which the girls reflect her movements. Another innovation follows in which Kalioujny performs a short solo alone on the stage. He re-enters to dance a beautiful lyrical *pas de deux* with Bardin. Dressed in white silk with a feather beret and white coat embroidered in gold, he is everything a Prince Charming should be to a beautiful ballerina.

This dream cannot go on forever so the girls enter and part the two lovers and the ballet continues, as in Copenhagen, with the male dancers doing *port de bras*.

The finale is also as in Copenhagen with the long diagonal line of dancers from the front left of the stage to the back right. There follows a series of *pas de deux*, a Mazurka, the whole company in *pirouettes*, *fouettés*, *grand jetés* and so on. It ends with the company advancing from the back of the stage followed by Kalioujny, then Renault and finally Bardin in great jumps.

THE weak point is, as already stated, the decor. The romantic part of the ballet has white bows all around the stage with three big bows back centre. They disappear after the lyrical *pas de deux* and are replaced by five columns on each side of the stage, through which can be seen a weeping-willow tree. This mixture of naturalism and stylisation was not satisfactory. The position of the columns obscured the dancers as they came on for their mounting crescendo. The shock of this effect which was so exciting in Denmark was completely lost in Paris.

For the rest there is nothing but praise. The new music, by Riisager, for the lyrical *pas de deux*, was lovely; the orchestra the whole way through was brilliant.

The *corps de ballet*—which everybody, for goodness knows how long, has said could never be disciplined—danced as one body. The precision, on which this work depends so much, was marvellous and the dancers gave the impression that they liked to dance the ballet.

Kalioujny made a noble partner and danced with virility. Michel Renault has one of the roles of his lifetime with so many *pirouettes*, *fouettés* and *grand jetés*. Micheline Bardin had a victory on account

The end of the ballet with Kalioujny, Bardin and Renault making their reverence to the public. The scene will be noticed to be different to the Copenhagen version which was shown on page seven of our January issue.

of her perfect musical timing, her sense of preparation and fine jumps.

The French papers gave the work some fine notices and so did the Danish ones, many of whom sent their own correspondents and ballet critics for the first night.

THE result of Harald Lander's work for the Paris Opéra has curiously enough led to one of most important events in Danish ballet history.

One year and fourteen days after he was dismissed from his position of Ballet Master of the Royal Danish Ballet, he was appointed Ballet Master, choreographer and professor of *étoiles, premier danseurs* and *grand sujets* at the Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris. The appointment came into effect on January 1, 1953.

Several Danes have appeared at the Opéra, including August Bournonville and Lucille Grahn, but none has achieved the high position of Harald Lander. Furthermore it is in his contract that he is allowed to leave, for three months of each year, to create ballets in other countries. Already he has made up his mind to choreograph some works for the Academia del' Danza in Rome. In the near future he will start on a series of 26 television films, taken in France but destined for America. Both French and English dancers are to appear in these films.

Bent Schonberg

NACHTZUG (NIGHT TRAIN)

The characters who appear in the strange dream of the Little Man on his way home from the theatre. They include Ulla Soderbaum, Patricio Bunster, Alfonso Unanue and Ronnie Curran.
This ballet in the lighter vein of Jooss will be seen when the Ballets Jooss make their tour of England starting in February. *Photo: Minos*

First performed in the Stadtische Saalbau, Essen, on December 9, 1952.

Choreography by Kurt Jooss. Music by Alexandre Tansman. Decor and costumes by Robert Pudlich.

The Little Man ..	ALFONSO UNANUE
A Nice Young Girl	ULLA SODERBAUM
Her Friend	HANS ZULLIG
An Artist	RONNIE CURRAN
The Guard ..	PATRICIO BUNSTER
A Faun	ROLF ALEXANDER

THIS "dream" ballet shows Jooss in his lighter vein, ably supported by his collaborators.

A little man returning home from the theatre falls asleep in the train. Opposite him a nice young girl who has just said farewell to her nice young man, does likewise. Both dream *Carnet de Bal* fashion. She floats away with her young man in a *valse bleue*. The little man dreams he is dancing with her.

A young artist enters the compartment, after which interruption the little man resumes his dreaming but in a more theatrical manner. The girl is now a nymph who is stolen from him by a faun. The artist enters the dream in order to rescue her—in fact both have left the compartment at the intervening stop—and finally the little man awakes to find himself alone. In desperation he pulls the communication cord but his only reward is a reprimand from the guard.

Ulla Söderbaum, Hans Züllig, and Rolf Alexander give their customary made to measure performances. The two Chilean dancers, Alfonso Unanue and Patricio Bunster, maintain the progress shown in Jooss' last work *Weg im Nebel*. Along with Michelle Nadal, they have also made possible revivals of *Ball in Old Vienna* and *Pavane*, and for the projected English tour early in 1953, *Prodigal Son* is to be restored to the repertoire.

New British recruits Ronnie Curran and Peter Wright are still settling in, but with Jooss' guidance are obviously destined to leave their mark on what can safely be described as Germany's only real ballet company.

J. Stuart Barker

The English tour of Ballets Jooss starts at Blackpool on February 16 followed by a week at the Arts Theatre, Cambridge, on February 23. It is not possible to give details of dates at the moment but more information will be found on page 26. The company of 26 will dance *Green Table, Le Bosquet, Ball in Old Vienna, Pavane, Big City, Colombinade, Night Train, Journey in the Fog, Dithyrambus, Fantasie* **and** *Prodigal Son* **(London only). The principal dancers will be Hans Züllig, Rolf Alexander, Ulla Söderbaum, Noelle de Mosa, Peter Wright and Ronnie Curran.**

New stars at the Opéra

THE public has received with great satisfaction the news of the nomination as *étoile* of Madeleine Lafon and the promotion to *première danseuses* of Josette Clavier and Claude Bessy.

A dancer of great assurance, Lafon possesses the purest classical technique and, for the past year, has enriched her perfection of style with an expressive warmth which her shyness had until then concealed.

Josette Clavier came into prominence at the age of 15 as a result of her interpretation of the Danseuse de Degas in *Entre deux rondes*. Since then she has continued to give proof of an undeniable presence and authority, technical as well as expressive.

Endowed with a sculptural beauty, at times a little cold, Claude Bessy is also a past-mistress of her art; the purity of her arabesque has seldom been equalled.

AS a result of the recent examinations the following promotions have been announced. Five *danseuses* of the Second Quadrille—Mlles. Motte. Poncet, Castanier, Bianchi and Granelli—pass to the First Quadrille, which Mlle. Garry has left to become a *coryphée*. Among the *coryphées*, Mlles. Vauchelle and Audoyneau, as well as Mlle. Ninon Lebertre of the Opéra Comique, have been named *petits sujets*. Mlles. Serval, Million and Amiel have become *grands sujets*.

Turning to the male dancers, Herrault has been promoted to the First Quadrille. Mayer and Dussaigne to be *coryphées*, Lefèvre, Aubertin and Mars to be *petits sujets*. The promotion of Jodel to *grand sujet* is specially welcome: he has the makings of a very fine classical dancer.

Finally, Bari and Lacotte have been named *premiers danseurs*. A pupil of the Opéra school since the age of eight, Bari has for some years made his mark in the ranks of the *grands sujets*. The purity of his style and his very great technical mastery have resulted in his being chosen as a replacement in several revivals both in Paris and on tour: as the White Cavalier in *Elvire*, partnering Lycette Darsonval, in the *pas d'action* in *Divertissement*, and more recently, as the youngest of the seven dwarfs in *Blanche-Neige*. In this latter ballet, Lacotte took over the role of the Prince Charming in the absence of Jean-Paul Andréani, who was ill. From the time, three years ago, when he created the part of the Assassin in *Septuor*, he has given continual proof of his virtuosity (for example, in his variation in *Etudes*) and his strong attack and power of expression.

These two promotions will arouse great interest, since they will give two deserving artistes the opportunity to shine in their own very different spheres.

Marie-Françoise Christout

THE DONG WITH THE LUMINOUS NOSE

Michel de Lutry, as the Dong, kissing the Jumbly Girl of Paula Hinton.

First given by Ballet Workshop at the Mercury Theatre on December 7, 1952.

Choreography by Michael Holmes. Music by Alexander Walton and Michael Hobson. Decor and costumes by Honor Frost. Poem by Edward Lear.

The Dong	MICHEL DE LUTRY
The Jumbly Girl ..	PAULA HINTON
Mr. Jumbly	KARL HARTMAN
Mrs. Jumbly ..	MARJORIE FIELD
The Jumbly Brother	HENRY HAYTHORNE
His other Sisters ..	DIANA PAYNE and SALLY WEBB
Those Who Watch ..	RONALD YERRELL

Photos Paul Wilson

Long years ago
The Dong was happy and gay
Till he fell in love with a Jumbly Girl
Who came to those shores one day.
For the Jumblies came in a Sieve, they did,—
Landing at eve near the Zemmery Fidd
Where the Oblong Oysters grow,
And the rocks are smooth and grey.

Happily, happily passed those days!
While the cheerful Jumblies staid;
They danced in circlets all night long,
To the plaintive pipe of the lively Dong,
In moonlight, shine, or shade.

For day and night he was always there
By the side of the Jumbly Girl so fair,
With her sky-blue hands, and sea-green hair.
Till the morning came of that hateful day
When the Jumblies sailed in their sieve away,
And the Dong was left on the cruel shore
Gazing—gazing for evermore,—
Ever keeping his weary eyes on
That pea-green sail on the far horizon,—

(*From* Nonsense Songs and Stories *by Edward Lear*)

TO think of Victorian poetry, as many do, as being solely concerned with philosophic thought and moral rectitude is to disregard the excellent nonsense verse the period produced. Apart from the genius of Lewis Carroll, the most celebrated Victorian nonsense writer is Edward Lear. Lear's poetry often has an almost morbid strain in it. He might be regarded as a kind of 19th century James Thurber.

The Dong with a Luminous Nose is a good example of his work. The Dong, a likeable nightmarish character that goes bang in the night, has a love affair with a Jumbly Girl. After her return to her own land, he spends his days and nights disconsolately searching for her. To assist his nocturnal prowlings he attaches a beacon to his nose. Not really a hilarious tale at all but rather wistfully sad in its flint-hearted nursery-book fashion. Michael Holmes's ballet has the qualities of the poem on which it is based.

Holmes is not prodigal with his talents. His ballets are carefully conceived and executed. With him, one would say, choreography as such is not the senior partner in the theatrical production of the ballet. The dancing he arranges is of comparatively small intrinsic interest being made to measure for the production as a whole.

This is a principle of ballet-making which in the past has stood such choreographers as Fokine and Tudor in good stead, but Holmes must remember that those predecessors took care "to load every rift with ore." Their choreography, subservient to the general demands of production though it may be, is not lacking in dance interest or originality.

In *The Dong* Holmes has made a sensitive theatre-piece, but if he is to produce ballets of lasting value, his sensitivity and taste must be wedded to more inventive dance images.

The poem was sung; a pleasing combination of song and ballet. The music by Alexander Walton and Michael Hobson (Hobson's arrangement of Walton's song, I take it) was excellent. Honor Frost is a full-blooded designer who fills the stage with charming decoration. Her present decor, a kind of imaginative lunar landscape, is admirable, as are her costumes, some of which appear to be based on Leslie Brooke's illustrations to Lear.

The two principal roles were delightfully danced by Paula Hinton and Michel de Lutry. She wore a mask-like expression of radiant silliness, exultant in its vacuity. He blew humanity into the sub-human Dong. Both were as one with the choreographer in his interpretation of the poem.

Clive Barnes

The Jumblies arrive in the sieve which is formed by the costumes of the surrounding dancers.

The Dong (Michel de Lutry) makes curious Learish love to the Jumbly Girl (Paula Hinton). Those Who Watch (Ronald Yerrell) is seen in the background—watching.

Beryl Grey as Odette and John Field as Prince Siegfried in Act II.

A tweak, a twist and a new Swan Lake

by PETER WILLIAMS

Photographed by Baron

What is it that turns a piece of felt resembling a domestic utensil into a hat which is woman's crowning glory? Just a tweak here and a twist there from the hand of a master milliner plus a sense of fitness on the part of the wearer.

NINETTE DE VALOIS has been the master milliner who has tweeked that old warhorse, *Le Lac des Cygnes*, into such shape that it is possible to see that Tchaikovsky's magnificent score is really the accompaniment to a masterpiece the Sadler's Wells Ballet now dances with a fine sense of fitness.

De Valois has skilfully rearranged the work so that it has a sequence with each situation developing naturally out of the preceding one. Leslie Hurry has sunk his natural bent for fantasy into the task of making the perfect environment for a four-act romantic classic. Frederick Ashton has created some new choreography for certain dances while keeping them in the style of Petipa and Ivanov. All these things made the ballet a most worthy dish to set before the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret at a Covent Garden Gala on December 18, 1952.

ACT I
Garden of the castle
(AFTERNOON)

It is the twenty-first birthday of Prince Siegfried (John Field). *His friend Benno* (Leslie Edwards) *and his tutor Wolfgang* (Ray Powell) *await the Prince in the castle grounds where the villagers have been assembled to provide dances in honour of the occasion. The Prince arrives and in the midst of the ensuing festivities the Princess-Mother* (Pamela May) *pays an unexpected visit. She does not approve of the Prince's companions and expresses her displeasure. Before her departure she reminds him that, having now come of age, he must choose a bride at the ball she has commanded to be held on the morrow.*

As day draws to a close, the peasants take their leave. The Prince's friends see a flock of swans flying overhead. They decide to hunt them and Benno persuades the Prince to join the chase. They leave the castle grounds together.

BY turning this into a single act, and not merely as a prelude to the first lakeside act, the ballet comes far closer to the original Moscow scenario than the later St. Petersburg one when this was always known as Act I, Scene 1.

The importance of the dancing has been added to by the inclusion of a *pas de six* by Frederick Ashton to the music of the waltz previously used as a prelude to act III (the ballroom act). It is a charming conception which was well danced by Lindsay, Drage, Beriosova, Melville and Chatfield; Grant, through no fault of his own, did not seem to fit. If there was any discrepancy between the style of the English choreographer and that of the Russians, it hardly mattered as the ballet had not got under way.

What was not certain was exactly who the people were. If they were peasants, a natural assumption, then their costumes were far too rich and seemed rather at variance with the other villagers around.

The same could be said for the well-known *pas de trois* which followed. Here the three dancers—Brian Shaw, Rowena Jackson and Pauline Clayden—appeared in strictly classical costumes of red and white. The two girls are the only persons in this act to appear in short tutus. Photographs of the contemporary Russian productions show that these dancers wear dresses of a similar style and length to the surrounding peasants. Both the music and the choreography suggest that these people are peasants. The *pas de trois* is charming, not grand.

It is a curious fact that as soon as an audience sees a short classical tutu they instinctively expect to see something brilliant. Perhaps that is why, apart from the male variation, this *pas de trois* usually misfires. On this occasion it was well given by Rowena Jackson, Pauline Clayden and particularly by Brian Shaw, who danced with his usual *ballon*.

As the peasant girl who deludes the Prince's tutor that he can dance, Anne Heaton made a tiny role into something exciting by her perfect precision. The final peasant dance has been revised and is certainly far more distinguished. Each of the dancers carried a bunch of ribbons, giving the whole affair an atmosphere of gaiety so frequently absent in the past. The whole *corps* kept almost regimental straight lines and danced with enormous verve.

The mime scenes which bind the dancing together have been improved and accented. The Princess-Mother of Pamela May was a truly regal person, human without any loss of dignity. Her every gesture was completely understandable.

Leslie Hurry's setting has the healthy tang of an early autumn evening. The sunset glows and the shadows creep across the fields towards the castle as night starts to fall. The whole act now makes a most fitting introduction to the main body of the ballet.

ACT II
Lakeside by moonlight
(THE SAME NIGHT)

The huntsmen sight the swans and inform the Prince (John Field), *but he prefers to remain alone with his thoughts. Suddenly he sees a swan approaching who, on reaching the bank, is transformed into a beautiful girl. She tells him that she is the Princess Odette* (Beryl Grey) *and that she and her companions are victims of an evil magician, Von Rothbart*

The new setting for Act I with Prince Siegfried (John Field) centre, surrounded by his friends and villagers who are about to dance in honour of the Prince's birthday.

(Alfred Rodrigues), *who has bewitched them.*

Only at night are they permitted to return to human form and even then their master watches over them in the guise of an owl. Odette's spell can only be broken if someone falls in love with her who has never before plighted his troth. Von Rothbart appears and Odette begs him not to harm the Prince. Siegfried attempts to shoot the magician but Odette stays his hand.

Swan-maidens fill the glade and Benno returns, only to become encircled by them. He calls the other huntsmen who, owing to the mist, mistake the frightened maidens for swans and prepare to shoot them.

The Prince returns in time to stop the shooting and Odette asks for his protection. The swan-maidens dance among themselves. Later the Prince returns with Benno, searching for Odette. Suddenly she appears again in their midst and Odette and the Prince express their love for each other.

Siegfried tries to restrain Odette from leaving him but she and her companions must, with the approach of dawn, return to the lake and resume their guise as swans.

The Prince is left to mourn their departure and, with his companions, gazes sadly after the flight of swans traversing the sky.

THERE is only one fault in Hurry's otherwise magnificent setting for this act: the branches are so closely entwined overhead that the huntsmen could not possibly see a flight of swans through them. It looks more as though they were all looking for bird nests. Perhaps the moment has come to return some well-designed swans to their old progress across the lake (I still believe that this could be achieved convincingly).

Otherwise, it would be hard to imagine a better background for this fantastic swan-hunting. The cold, clear lake and its surrounding mountains and stormy sky glow like a vast slab of chalcedony. There is nothing on the stage to impede the dancing yet a huge barren expanse is avoided by the semi-circular framework of the trees. In spite of its considerable acreage this lakeside meeting ground is still a secret place.

There have not been many noticeable changes in this act, except for some regrouping of the 32 swans. This formidable number makes a beautiful effect as they cross and recross, form into groups and lines.

Beryl Grey's Odette was technically faultless; not one foot or finger was out of place at any moment. Her line was lyrical and completely satisfying. She only lacked the inner fire which raises a performance from the very good to the sublime. A few faults, some exaggeration here and there, would have been almost welcome. It may be that Grey has got all that she can from England. Perhaps a few months with one of those showy undisciplined foreign companies would ignite that spark (it once did this to Fonteyn when she went to Paris to dance in *Les Demoiselles de la Nuit*). All through she was admirably partnered by John Field.

The two exits for Odette and Siegfried together have been changed and no longer do they seem like a courting couple on a seaside promenade. The first one is perfectly natural; in the second she does not go off with him but melts backwards through the group of swans who have been threatened by the huntsmen.

At the end of the act, Von Rothbart comes and drags her off by the arm. Although this would appear to give him less magical power, it does make a more dramatic climax and makes it more obvious that he is bringing her back into his power. In the old production he seemed like some eccentric rounder-up of swans driving the flock home to roost.

ACT III

Ballroom of the castle

(THE FOLLOWING EVENING)

The Master of Ceremonies (Leslie Edwards) *and the ladies of the court await the Princess-Mother* (Pamela May), *the Prince* (John Field) *and their guests. When all have assembled the prince is asked to dance with six girls from whom the Princess-Mother wishes him to choose a bride. None pleases him as his thoughts are still full of Odette.*

Suddenly two invited guests are announced. They are the magician Von Rothbart (Alfred Rodrigues) *and his daughter Odile* (Beryl Grey). *The Prince stands transfixed as he sees in the unknown visitor a striking resemblance to Odette and he is certain that she is the Swan Princess.*

A vision of Odette appears at the window to warn the Prince that he will be tricked but the Prince does not see her. The ball continues and the guests give dances from Hungary, Spain, Italy and Russia. The infatuated Prince returns with Odile and asks her hand in marriage. In spite of the still unseen warning of Odette, the Prince swears to Von Rothbart that Odile is his chosen love. Suddenly he sees the vision of Odette but it is too late for he has pledged his word to another and the Swan Princess must remain in Von Rothbart's power. The magician and his daughter, Odile, vanish and the court is thrown into confusion. In despair the Prince rushes out in search of his lost love.

THERE is a brooding, opulent Teutonic air hanging over this ballroom. It is exactly the sort of place which might be found in the castle we saw previously, at a distance, in act I. The lavish and beautiful costumes really give the feeling that a court ball is in progress. The dull gold pillars and dim tapestries surrounding the large window, through which can be seen the night sky, add to the claustrophobic atmosphere.

The new arrangement of the dance for the six Princesses is a considerable improvement but it is still a weak dance and it is hard to see how it could be otherwise. The white ostrich feather fans give the whole thing an air of a nineteen 'twenties musical comedy.

The czardas dancers in their rich red and gold costumes gave this Hungarian dance as well as we shall probably ever see away from

Above: The new ballroom setting for Act III with the courtiers dancing a Czardas led by Anne Heaton and Ray Powell (centre). The Princess-Mother (Pamela May) and Von Rothbart (Alfred Rodrigues) are seen sitting on the thrones on the right.

Right: Closer details of the fine costumes which Leslie Hurry has designed for the Czardas in Act III. They are of rich red with heavy gold embroidery.

Von Rothbart, in Act IV, realising that the Prince has sacrificed himself owing to his love for Odette, falls dead. The surrounding swans resume their human form.

its national background. The slow Slav opening section was danced with great style, the fast second section with verve.

The Spanish dance has always been a headache. If it were based completely on the national dances of Spain it would be out of place. It therefore has to be stylised. It is not helped by the rather banal music which Tchaikovsky has provided. This *pas de quatre* has certainly been improved and its shortcomings as a dance are obscured by Hurry's elaborate green and scarlet costumes for the girls.

Frederick Ashton has turned the *Danse Venetienne* (originally for several dancers) into a *Dance Neopolitain* for two dancers—Julia Farron and Alexander Grant. It has not suffered by its trans-Italian journey. This pseudo-tarantella came at a moment when the ball was starting to get rather heavy. It ideally suited the two dancers in question, who gave it all the bounding energy they possessed. It made a good contrast to the mazurka which followed and this early form of square dance was given with as much style as the previous czardas.

The costumes for all these national dances were far heavier than in previous productions and it was interesting to see how their weight, and the slow swing of the skirts, helped to give distinction to all the movements. Light, flimsy materials give a cheapness alien to any court dance.

It was odd that the Prince and Odile, having left the ballroom together, should come bouncing on from opposite sides for their *pas de deux*. A small point, perhaps, but one which slightly took away the feeling of the Prince's infatuation. It is hard to imagine Beryl Grey as the embodiment of evil and she is wise not to overdo the black side of the character but to concentrate on the dancing. This again was faultless and her *fouettés* were perfectly on place. In his variation, John Field showed his growing technical mastery—fine elevation and beautiful *batterie*.

Now that the whole scene has become so lavish the black costumes of these two, though well designed, tend to look rather drab. A little more glitter would help.

The clouds of smoke which come rolling in on the disappearance of Von Rothbart and Odile were most effective. How much better is the ending with the Princess-Mother left bewildered (instead of dead, as previously) on the throne while the Prince gropes his way through the fog.

ACT IV
The Lakeside
(THE SAME NIGHT)

The swan-maidens anxiously await Odette (Beryl Grey). *She returns distraught for life now holds no joy for her. She wishes to drown herself in the lake while she is still in human form. The glade is overcast by a storm and, as it clears, the distracted Prince Siegfried* (John Field) *arrives. He seeks Odette and implores her forgiveness for his unwitting betrayal of her trust in him.*

They surrender to the joy of meeting but Von Rothbart (Alfred Rodrigues) *appears and shatters their happiness—Siegfried must fulfil his oath and marry Odile and with the approach of dawn Odette must again become a swan.*

The lovers realise that it is better to die together while there is still time. Von Rothbart, alarmed, vanishes from sight. Siegfried and Odette cast themselves into the lake. Von Rothbart returns but it is too late; their joint sacrifice has broken the spell and he falls dead.

Through the waters of the lake, Odette and Siegfried voyage to a world of eternal happiness. Their journey is watched by the swan-maidens, now restored to their human form.

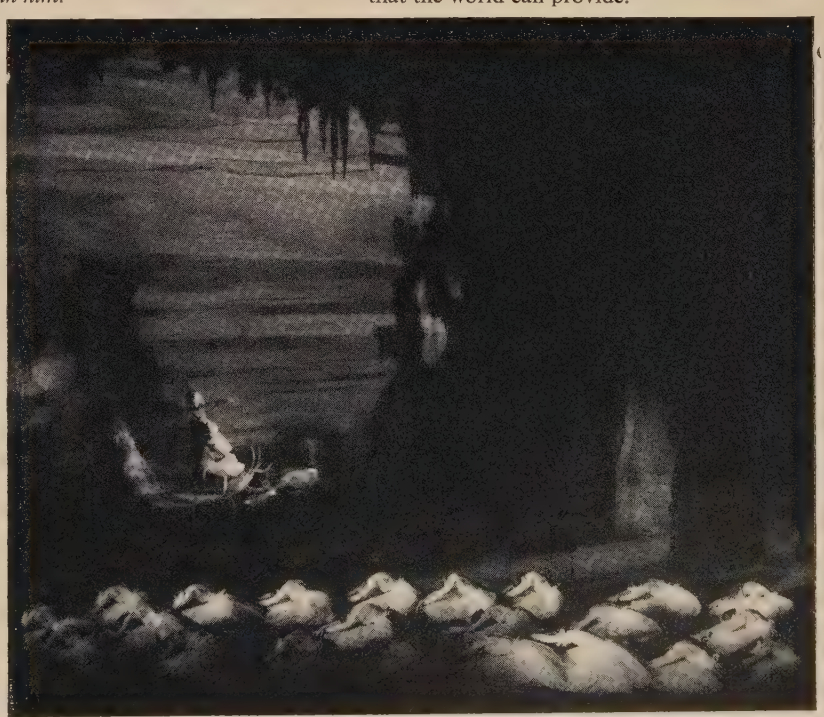
THERE have not been many changes to this most lyrical and tender of acts of all classical ballet, an act in which Tchaikovsky is at his best. Again there has been some regrouping of the swans and the fact that their number has been increased makes an even greater effect when the black cygnets weave in and out of the lines.

The storm heralding the approach of Siegfried has a rather limited streak of lightning which repeatedly comes jagging down in the same place.

How touching is the final *pas de deux* for Odette and Siegfried. It is so unobvious that it passes like a sad sigh. Their death should be more dramatic and it seems a pity that Odette cannot throw herself off a rock in full view of the audience in the good old operatic manner. At the moment it looks as though they are merely chasing each other into the woods.

Von Rothbart's death, also, should be more obvious for this is surely the climax of the story. However, these shortcomings are soon forgotten in the beauty of Hurry's submarine apotheosis with its submerged palace and exquisite barque bearing the lovers to eternal happiness.

The faults in this new production are of a minor character and many of them may have been put right before these words appear in print. There is not the slightest doubt that the new *Lac des Cygnes* will add as much prestige to the Sadler's Wells Ballet as their production of *Sleeping Beauty*. It is now as worthy a setting as could be found for the greatest ballerinas that the world can provide.



The lovers are united under the lake and sail away to happiness in a boat drawn by swans. The Swan-maidens bow in gratitude at being delivered from the powers of the magician.

curtain up!

Violetta Elvin in Milan. She is seen with choreographer Aurel Milloss and Maestro Victor de Sabata at the first rehearsal of Verdi's Macbeth *in which Elvin danced the role of Hecate at the special invitation of de Sabata. Elvin's appearances at La Scala, where she is a guest for three months, have even furthered the respect the Italians have for British ballet.*

Photo: Erio Piccagliani

Orpheus again

THE legend of Orpheus has a curious fascination for choreographers. When Frederick Ashton produces Gluck's *Orpheus* at Covent Garden on February 3, with his own choreography danced by members of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, he will be at least the third famous choreographer to stage the opera.

Fokine was responsible for the groupings and dances in the Maryinsky Theatre production of 1911. Balanchine's version, given at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York in 1937, was a landmark in the history of American ballet. He used dancers to mime all the roles while the singers performed off-stage.

Balanchine's later treatment, to music by Stravinsky, is familiar to London audiences. It will be interesting to compare Ashton's production to this, as well as to the ballet, using Gluck's music, which Ninette de Valois created during the war for the Wells company.

Ashton is experienced as an opera producer. He first achieved distinction in America by his production, in the 'thirties, of the Gertrude Stein-Virgil Thompson opera *Four Saints in Three Acts*. His production of *Manon* was one of the first post-war successes at the Royal Opera House.

Hail and farewell temporarily

CHRISTMAS, for many dancers, is a time of assured work in pantomimes. The pantomimes in their turn are a blow to small ballet companies. The recently-formed New-Ballet Company with its admirable aim of presenting a repertoire of specially created works, has been forced to disband for the time being.

There is every hope, however, that it will be revived and the venture will have the good wishes of all who care for the future of ballet. The more creative work going on, the better it will be for everybody.

Benefits of suburban travel

TRAVELLING to the outer suburbs of London to watch ballet is a depressing experience. So it is a particular pleasure to offer a bouquet to our readers in Richmond where Ballet Rambert played recently.

The Richmond Theatre (on the site where Edmund Kean ended his Shakespearian career) is charming. The public which filled it seemed more intelligent and enthusiastic than what one often encounters in central London.

Their applause gave grounds for thinking again about one of the time-honoured theories of ballet presentation—that the public is only interested in the well-known classics. Perhaps it is the familiar names which attract them in the first place, but this audience was obviously more delighted by the ballets of Gore, Tudor and Staff than by the 19th century works in the repertoire.

Roll up! Roll up!

THE year 1953 is likely to be a good one for visiting companies. Already there is talk of visits by Ballet Jooss (provincial tour, preceding the London season at Sadler's Wells Theatre, starts in February), American Ballet Theatre, The Teresa and Luisillo company, and by more than one French company.

The visit of Kurt Jooss's re-formed company will be a kind of home-coming both to Peter Wright (who left the Wells Theatre Ballet to join Jooss), and to Hans Züllig, who returned to head the company, with which he first made his name, after dancing for some time with the Theatre Ballet.

Dancing on the Milky Way

HOW rarely do occasions live up to their name. *Dance with the Stars* was what the New Year's Eve ball was called at Royal Festival Hall and usually a few stars make a faint attempt to shine through their tarnish in a dim night sky. Not so at this ball which was a regular Milky Way.

After a chilly beginning when it looked as though the modern austerity of the hall would get the better of the evening, the party settled down to one of the liveliest and friendliest of any of these affairs.

Festival Ballet (Festival Hall's resident ballet company) were hosts to other companies. Belinda Wright looked as though she was a star just dropped from a Christmas tree in her crisp and sparkling white organza ballet-length dress ; her hair was glittering with snow.

Sonia Arova, just back from Japan, was in a strapless touch-at-every-point dress of some fabulous brocade she acquired from under the rising sun. The bottom of the dress flared out into a fish tail which was stiffened with fine pleats. The whole effect (in the nicest sense) resembled one of those giant fishes which are flown on ceremonial occasions in Japan.

Also present were the majority of Sadler's Wells (both companies) and Ballet Rambert dancers who conga-ed, samba-ed, square-danced and generally made merry until well into 1953.

If this party becomes an annual institution it may well rival the other more established New Year's Eve balls. Nearly all of the 1,400 guests agreed that the dress-as-you-please (from grey flannel slacks to white ties) custom was infinitely preferable to fancy-dress (ranging from the undress of ancient fauns to the over-dress of 18th century panniers).

Kersley scores in Denver

FROM Denver, Colorado, comes good news of a popular dancer, Leo Kersley, who headed the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet during its formative years. He has made such a name for himself as a teacher there, that he has now opened his own school. If things continue at the present rate of progress, we may surely expect to hear one day of a Denver City Ballet.

Ballerina's loss

IT seems hard that Beryl Grey's great night of triumph at the Gala performance of *Le Lac des Cygnes* on December 18 should have been marred, for her, by a great tragedy. Her mother, to whom she was devoted, died in a nursing home just as Beryl was giving the performance of her career in the Odette-Odile role.

We are sure that our readers will join us

It's bound to happen— That Prince Siegfried will choose one of prospective brides produced for him in *Swan Lake* Act III which will bring the act to a premature ending. What will happen when Odile appears?

Drawn by Peter Revitt

in expressing heartfelt sympathy to this fine artist in her tragic loss.

Police and pirouettes

BEFORE the war, Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon wrote what must have been the first mystery novel about ballet—*Bullet in the ballet*. The humour and understanding of ballet-background made it more than an ordinary novel. After the war it was turned into a play for which Leonide Massine did the choreography and Irena Baronova starred. Unfortunately it never reached London. Now Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer are to make a film of the book which starts shooting in the near future. Clarence Brown who will direct and produce it says that police and *pirouettes* will become hilariously involved.

American as writ

JOSE GRECO, the Brooklyn-born flamencoist, who made good on the home-grounds of this style of terping, has been a concert, legit and even a two-a-day vaude draw in New York. With his debut at the Empire Room of the Waldorf-Astoria, Greco and his gifted colleagues indicate that they can work upper-crust cafes as well.

Greco and his troupe, comprising four femme and equal number of male dancers, two guitarists and a pianist, are probably the most skilled of Iberian terpers making the rounds today....

....Withal, Greco hits the Waldorf with a highly polished troupe. In Lola de Ronda, there's a looker who knows her way around the Spanish dance, and who imparts a touch of fragility in her interpretation of Albeniz's "Midsummer Night's Dream"....

....Finale with all performers is one of the most colourful terping jam sessions ever on a Waldorf-Astoria floor....

....The Greco troupe should attract the concert-goers as well as upper-crust Castilians, in addition to the regular Waldorf clientele. (from *Variety*, 17.12.52)

Beachcomber on ballet

LINES written to Snodunda, the Norwegian ballet dancer:—

I threw a dancer into the air,
She fell to the earth, I know not where
(And what is more, I do not care).
But judging by the screams and bawls,
She must have fallen in the stalls.

DEFINING the ballet as a "stylised interpretation of life expressed in terms of controlled and disciplined intellectualised emotion" is rather a pompous way of describing what to me is simply the integral representation by choreographic mime, gesture and positioning of eurhythmic stances and abstract motions connoting a harmony of architectonic ideas based on compositional conventions developed in a fluid medium, and culturally self-based. So they throw each other about.

(Reproduced by kind permission of the *Daily Express*).

happy birthday to...

		Feb.
Maryon Lane	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	15
Richard Ellis	formerly Sadler's Wells Ballet	19
Gerd Larsen	Sadler's Wells Ballet	19
Wolfgang Brunner	Festival Ballet	22
Alexander Grant	Sadler's Wells Ballet	22
Marguerite Stefan	Continental Ballet	23
Solange Golovine	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	24
Todd Bolender	New York City Ballet	27
Grace Greenway	formerly Empire Ballet	27
Mireille Le Febre	formerly Champs Elysées Ballet	27
Brooks Jackson	New York City Ballet	28
Malcolm Hughes	International Ballet	28
		Mar.
Anthony Burke	Ballet Legat	1
Pearl Gaden	formerly Ballet Rambert	2
Monique Boam	Continental Ballet	3
Josephine Spreckley	formerly Empire Ballet	3
Dorothea Zaymes	Sadler's Wells Ballet	6
Una Kai	New York City Ballet	7

Readers with birthday cards for dancers can address them c/o DANCE AND DANCERS, 12 Phipps Mews, Eccleston Place, London, S.W.1. Letters will be forwarded to the dancer's home address to arrive on the birthday. Please post early.

How we get around! Anton Dolin had this original wallpaper photographed while he was in Florence. It is possible to eat spaghetti and see the heading of your favourite paper at the Restaurant Bertolini.

Photo: Domenico

Backcloth to ballet

Theatre fabrics go round the world

by ANTONY COWPER

BALLET, as we all know, is a composite art made up of dancing, music and painting. Yet dancing, music and painting are hardly half of the real story. Ballet is a meeting place not only of the arts but also of the crafts.

Think beyond the main programme credits (choreography by X, music by Y, etc.) to that jumble of small-type announcements at the end, informing the inquisitive who made the costumes, who painted the set, that the ballet shoes are by Messrs. Whatsits, that the theatre is disinfected throughout (comforting thought) by J——s Fluid and that there is *no* smoking, not even A——h.

But one can probe further than even these announcements; through to the administrative machine (the press-agents, public relations men, box-office staff and programme sellers). Or if we like, through to the basic requirements of ballet—the carpenters, the canvas makers, the suppliers of theatrical fabrics.

This series is intended to introduce you to many of those people included in that gesture by some choreographers, meant, after a successful first-night, to imply thanks to everyone backstage and beyond, who has contributed to his success.

IT is with fabrics that we are making a start by taking you behind the scenes of the largest mail-order house in England handling theatrical materials, Leff and Jason.

The firm was started immediately after the first world war at small premises in Middlesex Street. Although the premises are now, of course, larger, and materials that then cost 10d. a yard have gone up to 3s. 6d., the firm is still there.

From the outside with its large plate-glass windows, the shop looks like any prosperous drapers. Inside one notices the huge bales of materials, hardly suitable for domestic use. Upstairs in the stock rooms is a profusion of fabrics, nets, tarlatans, satins, taffetas, sateens, georgettes, laces, organdies, brilliantly coloured rolls reaching to the ceiling. Most appear to be plain but here and there a figured fabric (a bright black and yellow harlequin print from France, or a plaid from Austria) adds its note to the general discord of colour.

At one time or another these rooms have provided fabrics for all our ballet companies. Their fabrics have appeared on all our stages.

The firm specialising on stage work faces a number of difficulties. It must keep special fire-proofed materials in bright colours and boldly-patterned designs that would be unsuitable for home use; and it must carry immense stocks and be prepared to supply orders sometimes almost literally at a moment's notice.

The mail-order business involves much work. Hundreds of thousands of "swatches" (the trade name for bunches of patterns) have to be prepared and distributed during the course of the year. Materials have to be exported to places like Canada, South Africa and America, and the task is not simplified by such occupational hazards as orders with no addresses or dealing with irascible managers and designers.

A theatrical supplier is judged primarily on the range and quantity of the stock he carries. Range not only of materials, an elementary matter, but more essentially range of colour. Blue may be just blue to you, but to the man dressing a West End show, blue is a whole tonal scale of differing shades.

This firm stocks 35 different colours of tarlatan alone, while even more may be available to special order. Theatrical fashion and theatrical colours change rapidly and because certain colours are exclusive to a large house, to some extent they may be said to be the arbiters of fashion. And as what is on the stage today is liable to be in your home tomorrow, these swings of fashion affect the world beyond the proscenium arch. (By the way we are told that the colour of the moment is—guess—emerald). In the past the whole trend of decoration was completely influenced by the colours and materials used by Leon Bakst for the Diaghilev ballet.

NEW RECORDS

Magnificent pagan rite

The Rite of Spring (Stravinsky). Philharmonia Orch. (Markevitch). HMV CLP1003. 1 12-in. LP. 35*s*.

THERE are no lukewarm opinions about *The Rite of Spring*. Either you like it or you don't. Of all the music that ballet has given to the concert hall it has always been the subject of most controversy, and has had the most far-reaching influences on contemporary music.

The story of Nijinsky's original production, which needed a fantastic number of rehearsals and the ensuing riot in the Théatre des Champs-Elysées on the opening night has now passed into history. The score's complexities of rhythm and tonality are no longer considered the work of a madman, Stravinsky's innovations have long been incorporated into the stream of modern music, and the *Rite* is now regarded almost as something of a classic.

This is an outstanding performance. Pagan Night could, perhaps, have been infused with slightly more mystery and atmosphere, but the concluding Sacrificial Dance is so carefully built up that for once it does not seem to go on for too long.

A magnificent recording allows every instrument to be clearly distinguished even in the most heavily scored passages.

Confused Sylphs

Les Sylphides (Chopin-Jacob). Covent Garden Orch. (Rignold). Parlophone PMD1003. 1 10-in. LP, 26*s*. 6*d*.

FITTING the music of *Les Sylphides* on to gramophone records seems always to have been something of a problem for the recording companies. Even when all the movements are given, they are usually not in the right order. In this performance there are cuts which take a couple of dozen bars out of the *Nocturne*, and there is a repeat of the *Prelude* before the *Grande Valse Brillante*, making three times in all. I cannot see any reason for this as the *Nocturne* could quite easily have been given complete and the C major *Mazurka* transferred to the second side of the record.

However, it does not matter very much as the music is insensitively played, coarsely recorded and has as little atmosphere as some performances of the ballet at Covent Garden. The orchestration by Gordon Jacob seems to have been modified—there is considerably less percussion than formerly (as is also the case at Covent Garden) but the arrangement is still far from satisfactory.

The alternative Decca LP version conducted by Desormière although better played is equally lacking in Sylphides mystery, and omits the opening *Prelude*. Of the many other recordings at standard speed, the older LPO version conducted by Sargent remains the best. The lovely orchestration which J. Ainslie Murray and Felix White worked out for the original Markova-Dolin Company is used and the performance captures all the magic. Incidentally, some people when playing these records might be puzzled by the inclusion of the A flat Waltz. So far as I know, it has never been used in the ballet, but as it occupies the whole of one side, it can easily be left out giving a performance of the ballet almost in correct order.

Beethoven's only ballet

The Creatures of Prometheus (Beethoven). LPO. (van Beinum). Decca LXT2741. 1 12-in. LP. 39*s*. 6*d*.

IT takes a vivid effort of the imagination to visualise Beethoven as a ballet composer surrounded by dancers in practice costume and discussing the finer points of classical technique. But the fact remains that his collaboration with Salvatore Vigano resulted in the score for the *Creatures of Prometheus*. The ballet was a great success in its day (1801) and would no doubt prove a fascinating historical curiosity were it possible for us to see it today, but, of course, only the music has survived.

De Valois used some of it for her ballet of the same name in the early days of Sadler's Wells. It is by no means first rate Beethoven but last year a complete recording of the music showed that there were some movements worth salvaging. This selection gives most of them on one record. The performance, if a little inferior to the previous one, has the advantage of a superb recording which is one of Decca's best.

Delicate pagan mysticism

Danse Sacrée et Profane (Debussy). *Introduction and Allegro* (Ravel). Chamber Music Society of Amsterdam. Phia Berghout (harp). Decca LX3097. 1 10-in. LP. 29*s*. 6*d*.

DEBUSSY'S little piece for harp and string orchestra is the music to which David Lichine's wistfully enchanting *Protée* was danced. In it the composer sought to recapture something of the spirit of antique pagan mysticism and one of the main reasons why the ballet succeeded lay in the fact that Lichine had a similar aim. The choreography had a youthful delicacy and lightness of touch that seems to have eluded Lichine in his more recent ballets and which wonderfully matched the haunting, evocative beauty of the music.

The *Danse* is really an accompanied harp solo and the artistry of the players in this delightful performance make it seem only too short. You will probably want to play it over and over again every time.

The performance of the limpid Introduction and Allegro is equally fine. Like the Debussy, it came into being through the composer being commissioned to write a work for the newly perfected chromatic harp. Many ballet-lovers will know it as the music for the shipwreck and underwater scenes in Andrée Howard's *Mermaid* where, like the composer, she used an economy of means to great effect.

Spice scented music

Music from Bali. Gamelan Orchestra from Pliatan, conducted by Anak Agung Gde Mandera. Argo. ARS1006-7. 2 12-in. LP. 79*s*.

THIS recording of a Balinese gamelan orchestra was made during an actual performance when they were appearing at the Winter Garden Theatre in August.

The gamelan is a percussion instrument consisting of an arrangement of gongs, bronze-keyed instruments, drums and cymbals played upon by seated musicians, and the traditions of its music are as ancient as the dances and rites it accompanies.

Among European composers Debussy and Ravel were fascinated by the instrument and attempted to translate its magical sound into the Western musical idiom.

The recording captures all the delicate overtones of these varied golden metallic sounds, and the wonderfully complex changes of rhythm prevent the tone from becoming monotonous. The subtlety and artistry of the musicians evokes the opalescence of moonlight which, the next minute, seems enveloped in a shower of silver.

The Indonesian Government sponsored the recording, and those responsible must be congratulated for making available what is possibly the most fantastically beautiful texture of sound ever to appear on gramophone records.

Poor Mr. Tchaikovsky !

Francesca da Rimini; Romeo and Juliet (Tchaikovsky). Columbia CX1030. 1 12-in. LP, 39*s*. 6*d*. Philharmonic-Symphony Orch. of New York (Stokowski).

MORE butchering of Tchaikovsky! Not only has Stokowski tampered with the scoring here and there, but both works have been shorn of their impressive endings and several bars of Stokowski-ised triteness substituted.

Francesca and Romeo and Juliet would seem in their heroic passion to have been ideal meat for a conductor who so loves the dramatic in music. But their intrinsic theatricality demands careful handling, and this attempt to dramatise what is essentially so completely dramatic to start off with results in anti-climax all along the line.

Although perhaps Tchaikovsky came nearer to Dante in Francesca than he did to Shakespeare in Romeo and Juliet, the latter is by far the nobler work, and there have been several ballets created to it in recent years. The former was used by Lichine for his turbulent *Francesca da Rimini*, which made such a magnificent vehicle for Lubov Tchernicheva.

For those who want LP recordings of these works, Decca have already issued the same coupling in splendid performances by the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra.

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SADLER'S WELLS AT COVENT GARDEN

IN spite of the lack of ballerinas, the public have been packing into Covent Garden to see the new production of *Le Lac des Cygnes* and all performances were sold out. The two newcomers to the Odette-Odile role, Nadia Nerina and Rowena Jackson, will be reviewed in our next issue.

Fonteyn hopes to return after her long illness to dance in February. Moira Shearer will return on February 7 and Alicia Markova should start her series of guest appearances in April.

John Cranko's new work will have its premiere in mid-March. As yet without a title, Cranko says it is an abstract landscape with figures. The work will run for 26 minutes and Nerina, Beriosova and Chatfield have principal roles. The music is Dohnányi's suite for orchestra in four movements.

The company are not now going to the Florence Festival as previously announced. They remain at Covent Garden until June 27 when the annual four weeks' holiday starts. A short season follows their month's period of rehearsal. They leave for America early in September.

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

NO less than four British companies produce a version of *Coppelia*, and a new Swanilda is a regular occurrence like the 1st of the month or a new French government. The productions of *Coppelia* given by both the Wells companies are inadequate, yet, against all the promptings of my better nature, I find myself quite often enjoying performances of them. For this I blame the Swanildas. The powers that be at Bow Street and Rosebery Avenue appear to have struck a vein of gold as far as Swanildas are concerned. Not content with their present galaxy they have now added another, Patricia Miller, who danced the role for the first time in London at the Saturday matinee of December 13.

Her peasant girl of the first act was just right. Vivacious and pretty she was the belle of that particular village. Technically her dancing provided one or two pleasurable shocks, her strong arm-movements and precise placing being particularly commendable.

In the other two acts her performance was not of quite the same high standard, yet was nevertheless more than satisfactory. A little more glitter and assurance (which will presumably come) would be welcome in the last act *pas de deux*.

Donald Britton made a cheerful job of Frantz. His dancing was much improved and genuinely exciting. He no longer attempts to jump as high as Nelson's Column, so now, even though he still retains exceptional elevation, he does not land like a sack of coals.

Stanley Holden's Dr. Coppelius has mellowed beautifully. It is a character creation of artistry—comic without being farcical, pathetic without being hammy. Margaret Hill danced well as Prayer.

Loudon Sainthill has made a few amends for his first designs for this ballet. The first and last scenes have been repainted and one or two of the costumes have been changed. All changes are for the better. In sober fact this is now the best *Coppelia* decor in the country, but I imagine that few will want to write home about it on that score.

Clive Barnes

A sickly dish

ON December 17, *Casse Noisette* was revived for the first time since the company returned from their American tour last spring. No doubt this truncated version was a good idea for Christmas audiences, but it did not do anyone else much good.

The Snowflakes scene now has no ballerina, no cavalier, no *pas de deux*, therefore no point. The *ballabile* of snowflakes is not strong enough to justify this scene being retained. The transformation to spring reveals a particularly ugly unripe haystack, again quite pointless. The final Kingdom of Sweets resembles a Rockingham dish (of a bad period) so overloaded with crystallised flowers that the dancing of the Ashton-Ivanov choreography passes almost unnoticed.

Perhaps on this occasion it was just as well, because both Fifield and Blair, as the Sugar Plum Fairy and her cavalier, were off form. Maryon Lane as a crystallised Rose, four boys as Nougat, and the Spanish dance led by Firmin Trecu, achieved some success in surmounting the saccharine mush of their surroundings.

By January 10 when Maryon Lane was dancing the Sugar Plum Fairy, the whole production had been pulled together. She is ideal for this role and is fast becoming one of the most important dancers in the company. A little less straining, particularly of her neck, would improve her line. She was well partnered by Blair, who, later in the programme, gave one of his most brilliant performances of Captain Belaye in Cranko's *Pineapple Poll*. Fifield in the title role in this work seemed to be better, if such a thing were possible, than I have seen her. This is one of the most enchanting roles in English ballet and it is hard to imagine that anyone will surpass its original creator.

BY the time these words are read, Margaret Dale's *The Great Detective* will have had its premiere on January 21. It will be the subject of an article in our next issue. Kenneth Macmillan plays the Detective and Stanley Holden, the Doctor. The music is by Richard Arnell, who composed such a fine score for *Harlequin in April*. The work is designed by Brian Robb.

The company starts a short provincial tour on February 9. Returning from another season at Sadler's Wells before their tour of the Low Countries. Their flying visit to Rhodesia takes place at the end of June and they will be away from England for about a month.

Peter Williams

BALLET RAMBERT

THERE is a sad little painted sign outside the Mercury Theatre announcing to a heedless world that the Ballet Rambert is permanently on tour. For over ten years this our senior company has been unable to penetrate to the heart of the metropolis. Apart from a couple of excursions into Islington and a few forays at Notting Hill Gate, the Ballet Rambert has established its London seat in Hammersmith. On December 2 it opened a two weeks' season at the Lyric, the more intimate of Hammersmith's two theatres and one with which the company has the strongest of historical links.

History was in the air on the first night as the programme covered twenty years of choreography, from Ashton's *Les Masques* to Charnley's *Movimientos*. The revival of this latter ballet is by arrangement with Ballet Workshop and is the second Workshop production to be adopted by the Rambert.

It was a little less impressive in performance than at the Mercury. The new decor and costumes by Helen Biggar and Eli Montlake are not improvements on the originals; the lighting looked haphazard. Nor did the Rambert cast as a whole measure up to their perfectly rehearsed mercurial predecessors, although among them Beryl Goldwyn danced with superb fire. She is now an excellent dancer who occasionally achieves a rare understanding between body and spirit, the actual mechanics of her dancing becoming indivisible with the role's interpretation.

Despite a few loose ends to be tidied up Charnley's vigorous and exciting divertissement is a valuable acquisition to the company's repertory. Moreover, its value will be enhanced by its use.

Les Masques, the oldest ballet on view, is a piece of Ashton juvenilia—slight, clever, tasteful and worth retaining for its Fedorovitch designs, Poulenc music and historic interest. Allowing for the inevitable depredations of time, one idly wonders what kinds of future would be forecast for a young choreographer who created this ballet today. DANCE AND DANCERS is not offering the usual prizes for brief reviews in the style of C.W.B., A.L.H., R.B., P.W. or A.V.C.

Tudor's *The Lilac Garden* is a wonderful ballet. A masterpiece. Its story of unhappy love never fails to stir the imagination. Here one feels are four people, the parted lovers, the possessive fiance and the discarded mistress, seen momentarily at the high-water mark of their lives, who have a past behind them and a future before them. They exist and it is as though they are a discovery of the choreographer rather than an invention. The present Rambert production is made notable by the striking beauty of Mary Munro as Caroline, a portrayal more affecting than any in recent years.

Walter Gore's *Plaisance* made a bright opening to the first night programme and it was in a Gore dramatic *pas de deux*, *Confessional*, that Sally Gilmour chose to make her farewell performances in England before leaving to settle permanently in Australia.

Confessional, a strange amalgum of Sibelius music, Browning poetry and Gore choreography, will always be associated with Gilmour. Its fevered story of a girl's unwitting betrayal of her lover to the Inquisition gives her a chance to play a virtuoso cadenza on her emotions. The shadowy figure (changed lighting made him far less shadowy than before) of her lover was well played by Esteban Cerda.

The virtual retirement of Gilmour, one of the most versatile artists in ballet and, among so many other things, a memorable Giselle, is a sad occurrence. It seems a pity, from our selfish point of view, that she should retire from the English scene so young and that we only caught glimpses of a maturity that promised to be so brilliant. But we will remember with the utmost gratitude the pleasure her dancing has given us over the years.

Clive Barnes

CARNIVAL OF ANIMALS

First given in London by the Ballet Rambert at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, on December 5, 1952.
Choreography by Cecil Bates. Music by Saint-Saens. Decor by Eli Montlake. Costumes by Helen Biggar.

Two Little Girls ..	PATRICIA ASHWORTH and THELMA LITSTER
The Lion	JOHN CHESWORTH
The Cock	CECIL BATES
The Hen	VALERIE MARSH
The Tortoises ..	CHRISTINE HAUGHTON and JOANNA BOWERS
The Kangaroo	NORMAN DIXON
The Fishes	MARY MUNRO and JOSEPHINE SPAULL
The Gentleman with Long Ears ..	ALEX BENNETT
The Cuckoo	SHIRLEY REES
The Bird Girl	NOREEN SOPWITH
The Swans ..	ANN HORN, GILLIAN MARTLEW and AUDREY BROOKES

CARNIVAL of Animals was first produced as a ballet by the Rambert in 1943, when it had choreography and decor by Andrée Howard. After a lapse of some seven years from the repertory it has been resuscitated in this second version by Cecil Bates. This is Bates's third attempt at choreography. My first impressions of the work were less favourable than at subsequent viewings.

How is one to treat the composer's score? Does one stress the humanity or "animalness" of the strange fauna Saint-Saens has so clearly depicted: are the characters to be humans dressed up as animals, or animals showing human characteristics? Howard, if memory serves, tended towards humans as animals; Bates, except in perhaps a couple of instances, sticks rigidly to the other way.

Then, how does one give unity to the isolated numbers of the score? Bates, sensibly avoiding any attempt at a story, makes the ballet a character *divertissement*, depending for its unity less on the intermingling of its characters

One of the last ballet photographs taken of Sally Gilmour before she left England for Australia. She is with Esteban Cerda in Walter Gore's Confessional. *Photo: Roy Round*

Sara Luzita in Ashton's Les Masques *during the recent revival by Ballet Rambert. The designs are by Sophie Fedorovitch. Photo: Paul Wilson*

throughout (a device more or less precluded by the music's programme) than on the introductory march and mazurka and the Finale.

The result is necessarily bitty and I feel the choreographer might have gained had he kept the Two Little Girls on stage during the ballet as spectators of the action, so providing a connecting link between the dances.

The score is not particularly inspiring (what a deadly-dull composer Saint-Saens was !) but the choréography has quite a lot of originality. Both the dance for the Cock and the Hen and the Mazurka are interesting, while the Bird Girl and the Can-Canning Tortoises are charming inventions. In the dance for the Swans he has successfully negotiated between the Scylla of Ivanov and the Charybdis of Fokine.

The Finale is a little too like a revue routine and more could possibly have been made of the dance between the Cuckoo and the Gentleman with Long Ears. Choreographically the ballet shows an advance on Bates's previous *Ronde Finale*, particularly in the greater degree of selection imposed on the movements. There is far less originality for its own sake than in the earlier work, with the consequence that Bates's inventiveness is more apparent.

The decor is bleak and looks like the background for a fashion display in a less enlightened Knightsbridge store. The costumier's task was difficult and her designs, apart from some handsome swans and modern-art poultry, are unenterprising. The ballet was given a good performance except in a few places where the choreographer's demands went beyond what could reasonably be expected from his cast.

Carnival of Animals is, on the whole, a useful ballet and quite easily the most important and unpretentious creation produced by Rambert since the departure of Gore.

Clive Barnes

A Tudor evening

MARIE RAMBERT has been entirely responsible for creating the choreographer—Antony Tudor. It has remained for alien hands to acclaim him as one of the foremost dance creators of our time. All that remains of his work in England is in the Ballet Rambert repertoire, therefore the programme on December 8 and 9 was of the greatest interest to those who so rightly admire his work.

Five ballets were given, five ballets which showed his varied genius for creating works of atmosphere which still have remarkable invention of movement.

Soirée Musicale (first given in 1938) is a Victorian after-dinner cabaret. This collection of character dances to Rossini-Britten music has charm, and it makes the perfect opening ballet. Beryl Goldwyn and Cecil Bates were spirited in the Tyrolese number. Sara Luzita (guest artist) brought a lush glamour to the Bolero.

That sordid little brothel saga, *Judgment of Paris* (first given in 1938) must be one of the nastiest ballets ever created—it is delightful. Three guest artists—Luzita as Juno, Joyce Graeme as Venus and Margaret Scott as Minerva—gave it with sleezy gusto. They showed how essential it is to have mature artists in what might be called "controversial" roles.

The Dark Elegies (first given in 1937) badly needs the artists who created it. Mahler's Kindertotenlieder (songs on the death of children) need a depth of tragedy which young dancers are unlikely to know anything about. It is so poignant in its understatement that more than mere execution of the dance movements is essential.

The Lilac Garden (first given in 1938) has been written about on the previous page, but there was a point in Mary Munro's performance of Caroline that I had not noticed before this Tudor evening. When Her Lover gives her the bunch of lilac, before she leaves with The Man She must Marry, her smile is remarkable. In that smile you feel that although she has lost the man she loves, she has, in this bunch of lilac, something that she will remember always and that nothing can ever take away from her. It is for these moments, as Richard Buckle has stated in a recent notice, that we go to the theatre.

The final ballet, *The Gala Performance* (first given 1938), would not be particularly gala in any theatre as it is given today. Beryl Goldwyn is piquant as the ballerina from Paris and Gillian Martlew had a grave Latin beauty as the ballerina from Milan. It would appear that Tudor got rather mixed up between the characteristics of the Italian and Russian schools. Or, maybe, the subtleties of the work have got lost over the years.

Looking at this formidable list of Tudor's early works it astounds one more than ever that there are none of his later works in the repertoires of our various English companies.

Peter Williams

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FESTIVAL BALLET

THE Christmas season at Festival Hall lasted from December 26 to January 10. Th full *Nutcracker* was given at each performance. An assortment of ballerinas—Leslie, Arova 'and Wright—were partnered by an assortment of cavaliers—Dolin, Gilpin and Briansky. The performances were of an equally assorted quality, but the audiences went away happy, which seems to be the main thing at this time of year. There were few spaces to be seen in this yast hall during the whole season.

The latter part of each programme was made up of the inevitable *pas de deux*, together with *Symphony for Fun* or *Prince Igor*. Charnley's ballet is getting even better and Gilpin has now mastered the third movement, which he dances with flowing grace. The Igor dances maintain their rousing high standard and are given as well as we saw in the pre-war Russian companies Trunoff twirls miraculously and his characterisation has improved.

The company opened their first Paris season at the Theâtre de L'Empire on January 15 and they remain there for a month. Michael Charnley is working on a new ballet based on *Alice in Wonderland* for the Coronation, Ruth Page is working on a ballet based on a famous operetta which will have its premiere whi'e the company is in Ireland. Several other new works are under discussion, including Harald Lander's *Etudes*, in which his wife, Toni Lander, may star.

Peter Williams

BALLET WORKSHOP

THE Ballet Workshop programme that was first given on December 7 opened with a suite of Israeli dances entitled *Scenes from Israeli Life*. These dances were originally performed in Tel Aviv at the First National Israeli Dance Competition, when they won first prize.

There were four dances, called *Carefree*, *A Spring Theme*, *Deep Furrows* and *Ceremonial*, and they were danced by Nachum Yehuda (their choreographer) and Dina. The dancers presented themselves badly, dividing their dances with long piano interludes played in the pitch dark.

Knowing nothing of Israeli folk-dancing I presume these were basically authentic, but I imagine that they have been somewhat stylised in the "free dance" tradition.

The dances were interesting and succeeded in overcoming the stumbling-block to the stage presentation of any folk-dances, by being entertaining. The best was the last, entitled *Ceremonial*. This was given the following programme note:—

From the wells of Shiloach the procession marches to the Temple bearing an urn of water. With great solemnity the ceremony begins and prayers of repentance are followed by the water offering. The silence is broken as the festival ends in a frenzy of excitement.

"in joy shall ye draw forth water from the wells of salvation."—(Isaiah)

Inherently dramatic in structure the dance had an obviously reverent feeling for religious ritual.

Clive Barnes

NEW-BALLET CO.

The New-Ballet Company disbanded for the time after its season at the Harrow Coliseum ending December 13. The following two ballets were not included in last month's issue, but they will certainly be in the repertoire when the company re-opens.

ROMANTIC ASSEMBLY

First given by the New-Ballet Company at the Wimbledon Theatre, November 14, 1952.

Choreography by Walter Gore. Music by Stephen Heller. Decor and costumes by Ronald Wilson.

It is evening. Before the gaily costumed guests appear Frederica awaits the arrival of her lover, who, during the course of the festivities, is proved to be inconstant.

Cast

Frederica..... ELIZABETH CHRISTIE
Ilsa..... SHELAGH MILLER
Max..... NIGEL BURKE
Margot..... MARGARET KOVAK
Clara..... CONSTANCE GARFIELD
Agathe..... ANGELA BAYLEY
Karl..... KENNETH SMITH
Johann..... ALAN BAKER

THERE is a greater range to Gore's choreography than even some of his staunchest supporters realise. The grotesque style (macabre, passionate or childlikely innocent) in which most of his ballets are composed is not his only choreographic manner. In *Plaisance* he tried his hand at a more or less straight "romantic" ballet (which was, in fact, the style of his earliest work) and in *Romantic Assembly* he has produced another ballet in a similar vein.

How important, vitally important, is music to a ballet! In *Plaisance* Gore used music by Rossini, the gay inexhaustibly inventive Rossini of *William Tell*, *Moses in Egypt* and *Semiramide*. In *Romantic Assembly* Gore uses music by the 19th-century Hungarian composer Stephen Heller, the tedious, inextinguishably monotonous Heller of the piano *Etudes*. Heller's music is graceful in small doses, but boring in quantity. Naturally a ballet gives us quantity.

In addition to the score's failure, Gore's ballet is too long and its structure—one remembers it chiefly as a series of *pas de deux*—is wearisome. The slender story is stated principally at the beginning and end of the ballet and is given no dramatic motivation or justification.

Obviously the choreographer was aiming at presenting a nosegay of Victoriana and had he made his ballet shorter and used more suitable music (Mendelssohn or Schumann, say) he might well have been successful. Some of his contrasted *pas de deux* are as charming as the scent of Victorian *pot-pourri* and as inventive as great-grandmamma's lace hanky. On the other hand, some of the choreography is as platitudinous as the Albert Memorial.

Ronald Wilson's decor looked muddled—half representing an interior scene, half a garden. While many of the well-assorted costumes were spoilt for me by being executed in satin, a stage material I personally detest. Like the choreographer, Wilson's art is better revealed in Gore's other recent ballet, *Street Games*. Among the cast Angela Bayley, Constance Garfield, Margaret Kovac and Nigel Burke were outstanding.

HE WAS HER MAN

First given in London by the New-Ballet Company at the Coliseum Theatre, Harrow, December 11, 1952.

Choreography by Frank Staff. Music by Patrick Harvey. Decor and costumes by Hugh Stevenson.

Cast

Chorus..... ANGELA BAYLEY
Battling Brady..... JACK SKINNER
Frankie..... CONSTANCE GARFIELD
Johnnie..... ALAN BAKER
Hostesses
ANGELA BAYLEY, ELIZABETH CHRISTIE, MARGARET KOVAC
A Habitue..... NIGEL BURKE
Nelly Bly..... SHELAGH MILLER
Barman..... KENNETH SMITH

THIS is the fourth ballet to be based on the Frankie and Johnnie ballad. The first, by Ruth Page, originally presented in 1938, has never been given in this country. Walter Crisham once danced Johnnie in the revue *Better Late* and in 1950 Frank Staff produced another version at the Empire Cinema. This present ballet is an entirely new re-working of the theme by the same choreographer. To mark the difference Staff now calls it *He Was Her Man*.

The ballad *Frankie and Johnnie* (occasionally known as *Frankie and Albert*) is perhaps the most famous in modern American balladry. Negro in origin, it exists in innumerable versions and has triumphantly survived even commercial exploitation by Tin Pan Alley. It tells the story of a prostitute who shoots her philandering pimp.

Unless Staff is using a variant of the ballad unknown to me, he has amended his source considerably. Frankie, in his version, is not a tough prostitute, Johnnie is little more than a bar-room spiv, the bartender no longer betrays the wayward lover, while Johnnie is cheated of his funeral and Frankie of her prison cell. The simpler concentrated story that emerges is more malleable to Staff's purpose, but lacks the poetry that transforms a police court record into a tragedy.

Staff's production is slick. It starts abruptly with the shooting, blacks out and recounts the story in "flash-back." Verses of the ballad are sung (over an anachronistic and vile-sounding microphone) between the story.

There is a worthwhile effort made to set the ballet in a fixed period and place (eighteen-seventyish; Middle West) and Staff has caught much of the laconic humour of the piece. His choreography is frequently apt—the bar-room habitués have a well-conceived dance of boredom, and a *pas de deux* for Frankie and a bed is brilliant—but rarely reaches the heights to which one feels it to be aspiring.

Hugh Stevenson has produced an elaborate and convenient set consisting of an immense grey wall with two large apertures, shaped like mouse-holes, cut into it. In one is placed the bar, in the other Frankie's bedroom. Some of the costumes have a flashy authenticity and greatly assist the work's atmosphere.

Constance Garfield was an alluring and pathetic Frankie. Her role, making intelligent use of full-point, was choreographically better conceived than any other in the ballet and she was able to extract its full value. Alan Baker was a smooth-faced, callous Johnnie and Shelagh Miller vamped her way effectively through the role of Nelly Bly.

Clive Barnes

One of the best entertainments provided for the Christmas season was the Victorian pantomime, Babes in the Wood, *at the Players' Theatre. The choreography for the two charming ballets was by Michael Charnley, who, together with Sonya Hana and Josephine Gordon, danced in them. As Good Little Fairy-Birds, Gordon and Charnley are seen above in the Forest scene.*

The pantomime ended traditionally with a Harlequinade. Charnley is Harlequin; Gordon, the Cat; Hana, Columbine. The choreography showed that Charnley has a great understanding of this peculiarly English form of ballet.

Photos: Roy Round.

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Dance and Dancers . . IN AMERICA

by Arthur Todd

Alexandra Danilova in the title role of Zachary Solov's Mlle. Fifi. *Photo: Isadora Bennett*

DANCE activities in New York have been continuing on a multiple basis with new premieres being presented in both the ballet and modern dance fields during the last few weeks. As a matter of fact, the Slavenska-Franklin Troupe, with Alexandra Danilova as guest star, won such a marked success with two of its new works, Valerie Bettis' *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Zachary Solov's *Mlle. Fifi*, that the company prolonged its New York engagement at the Century Theatre for three additional weeks. Meanwhile, Jose Limon and his Dance Company scored an artistic triumph in their special series of performances at the Juilliard School of Music.

SLAVENSKA-FRANKLIN Co.

MOST of the first night audience were both surprised and delighted with the Slavenska-Franklin Ballet which opened in New York in mid-December. The surprise was that *A Streetcar Named Desire* emerged as the most exciting contemporary ballet of the year. And the delight, shared by almost everyone, was over this modest little company which, aside from its stars, comprised chiefly of a group of talented and able young dancers. This company, which had been touring since late summer, is headed by Mia Slavenska and Frederic Franklin.

If for nothing else, Valerie Bettis' version of *A Streetcar Named Desire* would be remarkable for the reason that it gives Frederic Franklin the best role (as Stanley) that he has had in his entire career and he danced it to perfection. Tough, common, lusty, hard-bitten—all of these characteristics were inherent in Franklin's performance. Mia Slavenska brought technical brilliance and drive to the role of Blanche; Lois Ellyn, formerly with the New York City Ballet, gave depth and poignancy to the pivotal role of Stella.

Judged by almost any standards, *Streetcar* is neither a full fledged ballet nor a balanced modern dance work. Rather, it is a forty-five minute compendium of ballet, modern dance, jazz, realism, surrealism and symbolism set to a fine score by Alex North, which was arranged from the sound track score of the film of the same name. Obviously, Miss Bettis presupposed that everyone in the audience had seen the stage or film version of this, one of America's most widely acclaimed plays of the last decade. However, those who had seen neither of the previous versions were sometimes at a loss as to the general proceedings. It is here, I believe, that the work fails but this is a minority opinion. Any dance work should stand on its own and should not require as its basis another art form, in this instance a play. Perhaps this is merely quibbling, especially when you consider Franklin's performance. Certainly this new role even overshadows his well remembered portrayals in such contemporary works as Ruth Page's *Frankie and Johnnie* and Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo*.

New role for Danilova

THE other major high spot in the repertoire, Zachary Solov's *Mlle. Fifi*, was designed primarily to fit Alexandra Danilova, and the result is one of the richest character roles that she has had in her entire career. Like *Streetcar*, it's really not a ballet at all. Rather, it's a mimed romp, with a nice little variation thrown in for Mme. Danilova. Cast as a Parisian tightrope walker of the 80's, she is dressed in an unbelievable pink tutu that is scattered with black sequins and all of this is topped off with a dazzling blonde wig. The action deals with a young Frenchman and his father, both enamoured with Mlle. Fifi. After misunderstandings and a minor skirmish, all three depart for what looks like a menage *á trois* as the curtain falls. Marvin Krauter and Roland Vasquez, respectively, do well by the father and son roles but the greatest share of the credit is due to Mme. Danilova for a wickedly hilarious portrait.

Works by Slavenska

LESS distinguished items in the repertoire were two works choreographed by Mia Slavenska. Her *Symphonic Variations*, set to Cesar Frank's music and designed for the younger soloists and corps, was a weakly distilled ballet of the music visualisation school. Another, *Portrait of a Ballerina*, was a pastiche depicting "the young dancer's basic conflicts, the demands of her profession as opposed to her need for a life of love and reality." Slavenska was the young dancer, Franklin the Maestro and Danilova was the Portrait of a Ballerina, who occasionally came to life, stepping down from a picture frame. Outshining these choreographic efforts were the lovely green and white costumes designed by Slavenska for *The Nutcracker Suite*, also her costumes for *Symphonic Variations*.

It has been interesting indeed to watch this little company establish its position during its extended New York season. Granted, its three stars have a tremendous personal following. In addition *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Mlle. Fifi* have been distinct hits as far as the press and public are concerned. Interestingly enough, both are story ballets, proving, perhaps, that there is a strong audience demand for such works in America.

JOSE LIMON COMPANY

DURING his special mid-December series of performances at the Juilliard School of Music, Jose Limon and his Dance Company, under the artistic direction of Doris Humphrey, scored an artistic and critical triumph, with Mr. Limon covering himself with personal glory as well for his magnificent dance performances.

Dancing four demanding roles on the first night, Limon established himself, beyond a shadow of a doubt, as the greatest male modern dancer in the world today. Since Limon is still an unknown quantity in England, though he has danced in Paris, one can only describe him as having a similar mastery of his dance instrument as Igor Youskevitch, also, a like virtuosity, virility and personal magnificence. (This comparison is obviously unfair to both Mr. Youskevitch and Mr. Limon since each, in his own field, is incomparable.)

Four years ago, during his last major New York season, Jose Limon was hailed as a great dancer. Now, after important seasons in Mexico City as well as transcontinental tours, he has returned with four new dance works and established himself at that rarest degree in dancers, a genius. We have seen two or three other dancers of such magnitude from Britain and France and so it was wonderful to realise that another had developed here in our midst.

Of the eleven works presented, there were first New York performances of five new works by Mr. Limon, two new dances by Doris Humphrey as well as an important revival, together with two established successes each by Miss Humphrey and Mr. Limon. Of these, at least eight would enrich the contemporary repertoire of any major ballet company.

Among these were *El Grito*, a large group work for an ensemble of twenty choreographed by Jose Limon, in which he also danced an important role. First performed in Mexico City under the title of *Redes* (which means *The Nets*). This dance alludes to the gigantic nets woven by the Mexican fishermen. The music, by Silvestre Reveutlas, was originally composed as a score for the film *The Wave* and has since been arranged in a symphonic suite.

The Visitation, also choreographed by Jose Limon, featured the dancer with Pauline Koner and Lucas Hoving in a dance based on the legend of the Annunciation, showing how the lives of two lowly human beings were transfigured utterly after a visit by a celestial messenger. There was the magnificent *The Moor's Pavane*, set to music by Henry Purcell, which takes its theme from the basic plot of Othello. Also, there was the stunning *La Malinche*, a dance about the conquest of Mexico by Cortez.

The great Doris Humphrey

DORIS HUMPHREY, who has no peer today in America in the field of choreography, produced a superb new group work for six soloists to Mozart's

Jose Limon and Pauline Koner in Limon's ballet The Visitation *to Schoenberg music. The work is about two lowly beings who are transfigured after a visit from a celestial messenger.*

Limon is a Mexican who has become one of the greatest exponents of the Modern Dance, both as a dancer and choreographer. He appeared in Europe a few years ago with Ruth Page's Les Ballets Americaines in Paris. His work left a deep impression on all who saw him.

Photo: Robert Perry

Fantasy and Fugue in C Major and Fugue in C Minor. Miss Humphrey, who is also probably our most musical choreographer, again demonstrated how truly moving a purely abstract dance can be. Based almost entirely on stage design, the use of pace, the relationship of the dancers and their designs to music, this work made stunning use of diagonal patterns. Significantly, though there was no plot, there was no feeling of a group of automatons performing technical exercises because each figure came across as a human being. Their movements were creatively new, the dancers had an awareness of themselves and each other.

The same held true of the revival of Miss Humphrey's *Variations and Conclusions from New Dance*, a great work originally created in 1935. As performed by a group of twelve, this dance proved as stirring theatrically as when it was first created. New to New York was Doris Humphrey's *Night Spell*, to the music of Priaulx Rainier's String Quartet Number One, which told of a sleeping man beset by " things of the night," figures and fantasies against which he struggled to final victory.

Mr. Limon's other new works included *The Exiles*, a duet for Letitia Ide and himself, was based on a passage from Milton's *Paradise Lost*. *The Queen's Epicedium*, set to music by Henry Purcell, and choreographed by Mr. Limon for three women dancers in the company, was an elegy on the death of Queen Mary, 1695, which referred to the dead sovereign as the Queen of Arcadia, dealing with the grief of the nymphs and shepherds. Miss Humphrey's moving *Lament for Ignacio Sanchez Mejias*, based on the poem by Garcia Lorca, and her lovely *Day On Earth*, comprised the balance of the distinguished repertoire.

Mr. Limon's permanent company, which includes Letitia Ide, Betty Jones, Ruth Currier, Lucas Hoving, Lavinia Nielsen and guest artist Pauline Koner is, unquestionably, the finest modern dance company now appearing in America. Its series of appearances at the Juilliard School of Music added lustre to this forward-looking institution and provided one of the major highlights of the year in American dance.

N.Y. CITY BALLET

THE New York City Ballet, whose season lasted until late January, included seven new works or revivals new to their repertoire. Among these were Jerome Robbin's *Interplay* with Janet Reed, Melissa Hayden, Todd Bolender, Frank Hobi and Michael Maule prominently cast ; George Balanchine's *Harlequinade*, to music by Drigo, for Maria Tallchief and André Eglevsky; Ruthanna Boris' *Kaleidoscope*, to music by Dimitri Kabalevsky, and including Melissa Hayden, Patricia Wilde, Frank Hobi and Todd Bolender; *Concertino*, formerly known as *Dance for Three*, by George Balanchine, to music by Jean Francaix; *The Five Gifts*, formerly in the repertoire of the American Ballet, by William Dollar to music by Ernst Dohnanyi; *Valse-Fantasie*, by George Balanchine, to music by Glinka, with Tanaquil Le Clercq, Diana Adams, Melissa Hayden and Nicholas Magallenes; and, finally *Will o' the Wisp*, which was Ruthanna Boris' re-staging of the Virgil Thomson music for *Bayou*.

DANCING IN MUSICALS

SINCE Ballet Theatre's departure, considerable interest has centred on dance in the Broadway theatre. Most outstanding, so far, have been Hanya Holm's choreography for the new musical, *My Darlin' Aida*, a modernisation of Verdi's *Aida* score brought down to Civil War Times and set in Louisiana; also the special engagement of The National Theatre of Greece, which has provided a superb example of dance integrated into the traditional Greek Chorus.

British audiences who admired Hanya Holm's dances in *Kiss Me, Kate* would be similarly interested in her choreography for this, her sixth, major Broadway production. There is far less actual dancing in this musical play than one might wish but what there is is brilliantly conceived and executed.

The traditional dance for the Moors has now been translated into a charming caper for three serving maids preparing their mistress for a party. The triumphal scene dance music has been employed to marked effect in a military drill which is followed by a carnival ballet, complete with a magician (brilliantly played by Gordon Hamilton), tumbling clowns and dancing girls.

Miss Holm's major dance, set in a Negro cabin, injects dance exactly where it is needed in this version. Since Verdi provided no music that could fit this new dramatic need, the choreographer wisely decided to let her dancers provide their own accompaniment. Thus there are the percussive sounds of hand-clapping, drumming on barrel heads, rattling bones and scraping on washboards. This scene of erupting tension builds so strongly that it is easily the most compelling point of the entire production.

No setting for Kaye

THIS much heralded musical revue, which brought Bette Davis back to the Broadway theatre, was generally uneven and undistinguished despite the fact that many of our leading theatre craftsmen had a hand in it. Aside from the mercurial Miss Davis, its chief animation was provided by its dances staged by Jerome Robbins. Unfortunately, they too, were on a routine level and were not among the most creative that he has devised for the theatre.

Nora Kaye, on leave from the New York City Ballet Company, appeared in three numbers, none of which will add to her reputation as the ranking dramatic ballerina of our day. In *Baby Couldn't Dance* she is teamed with hoofer Bill Callahan as a girl who isn't aware of the new jazz steps. However, after attending a burlesqued ballet class, this number purports that she can now dance as well as the hoofer.

She appears as a rejected girl in *Roundabout*, a pretentious charade that reminded some of Antony Tudor's *La Ronde*, others of certain aspects of Mr. Robbin's *Facsimile*. The setting is a ballroom, the dancers indulge in dance forms resembling children's games. There was some trite dialogue as well but it was not used as a departure point and thus served little purpose aside from novelty.

Haunted Hot Spot, visually the most interesting dance, presented Kaye as a strip tease dancer in love with a night club drummer. From him she turns to the pianist and the ballet ends with the drummer shooting the errant couple. All of this dance material may be perfectly suitable for a revue but it seems a pity to waste Nora Kaye's rich talents on such mediocre fare.

Maria Karnilova, ballerina last year at the Metropolitan Opera House, has only two dances in this revue but actually comes off considerably better. One is lyric and full of lovely movement, phrases and lifts. In the other she is cast as an hilariously uninhibited south-of-the-border dancer and performs with great comic skill.

NEWS IN BRIEF

THE Slavenska-Franklin Ballet has been signed to appear in Japan during May or June. Sponsored by Minichi Shinbun, Japan's largest daily newspaper, the company will be flown to and from Japan under a contract that specifies a four week engagement with an option for a second four weeks.

JOSE GRECO, who had such a successful engagement at the Waldorf-Astoria's Empire Room in December, opened a two week season, with his full company, at the Century Theatre in mid-January. Appearing too late for review in this issue, it will be reported in the March issue.

TROPICANA, the all-Negro dance programme starring Talley Beatty, former partner of Katherine Dunham, is again touring the United States after its recent visits to France, Italy, Israel and the Scandinavian countries.

FOR mid-April the Juilliard Department of Dance has scheduled invitation showings of its students in a new ballet by Antony Tudor and a revival of Doris Humphrey's *With my Red Fires*. If his schedule permits, Jose Limon will also choreograph a new work for this student group. Plans call for public performances of these works in a special autumn season at Juilliard.

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Dance and Dancers . . IN FRANCE

by Marie-Françoise Christout

PARIS OPERA

AT the last performance of *Giselle*, with Lifar and Darsonval, Claude Bessy assumed the role of the Queen of the Wilis with great dignity. Michel Renault has appeared as the Apollo in *Entre deux rondes*, formerly Lifar's role, but seemed subdued and ill at ease. His recent rendering of the principal role in *Mirages*, alongside Vyroubova, on the other hand, was exceptional.

After Jean Babilée, Youly Algaroff has just entered into a contract with the Paris Opéra. On January 7, 1953, he will make his debut there in *Roméo et Juliette*, with Vyroubova, one of whose best roles is that of Juliet. These two engagements and the recent promotions give promise of a very interesting season.

On Friday, December 19, 1952, was given the first performance of *L'Aiglon*, by E. Rostand, adapted by Henri Cain, to music by Jacques Ibert and Arthur Honegger. The ballet, arranged by Aveline with Madeleine Lafon, Josette Clavier, Claude Bessy, Jean-Paul Andréani, Bari and Touroude in the principal roles, was a divertissement in the romantic spirit, but without much originality.

GRAND BALLET DU MARQUIS DE CUEVAS

DURING December, the Cuevas company has presented two new works at the Théâtre de l'Empire.

Tertulia, ou les deux rivales, music by Manuel Infante, choreography by Ana Ricarda, scenery and costumes by the Spanish painter Capuletti, was created on December 11, 1952.

In the wings of a Madrid theatre in 1860, two ballerinas (Ana Ricarda and Jacqueline Moreau) are rivals for the favours of a dancer (Wladimir Skouratoff) as well as those of the public. Only the performance brings an end to their jealousy and intrigues. A happy pretext for evocations of Spanish and classical dance, the ballet concludes with an agreeable divertissement.

Taras and butterflies

DECEMBER 23 saw the first performance of *Piège de lumière*, a ballet by Philippe Hériat, arranged by John Taras to music by Jean-Michel Damase, with scenery by Félix Labisse and costumes by André Levasseur. Its theme is simple.

In the solitude of a tropical forest in South America, escaped convicts are fleeing. In order to exist, they set flares in the twilight to attract the butterflies, who are then captured and bartered for food. The first scene opens very well with a *pas de cinq*, but the choreographic interest then flags, despite the arrival of Wladimir Skouratoff as a young convict. Night falls, and Scene II depicts the circling of the insects, attracted by the flare, twisting and turning in an endless *diagonale*. The

bounding entrance of the brilliant Iphias (Serge Golovine) and that of the great Morphide (Rosella Hightower) draped in blue and purple veils and carried in by four male dancers, break the growing monotony.

Their *pas de deux* has several happy moments, as has the *pas de trois* when two butterflies try to prevent the capture of the Morphide by its pursuer (Skouratoff) —*tours en arabesques*, fish-dives and neo-classical arabesques—and the finale, when Iphias dies and the convicts file by bearing their victims, stilled in death in sharp *arabesques* and *dégagés*.

The scenery of the luxuriant forest, full of humid greens, and the very lovely drop-cloth showing a flight of glistening butterflies, are one of the best elements of the production and worthy of the brush of Labisse. The pleasant score supports happily a choreography somewhat uneven in its inspiration and lacking ingenuity in the evolutions of the *corps de ballet*. Rosella Hightower with her supple and precise virtuosity, Golovine with his renowned *ballon* and Skouratoff with his powers of expression and his harmonious technique, once again stand out.

TERESA AND LUISILLO

TERESA AND LUISILLO chose the Théâtre des Champs Elysées to give their show of Spanish songs and dances from December 19. It was in this theatre that they were first seen in Paris in the company of Carmen Amaya, attracting attention not only by their attack, but by their unusual natural elegance.

Having travelled the world, they have returned to give, with their own company, a show to be applauded. All too often Spanish troupes, whether genuine or not, swathe their frenzied evolutions in a whirl of variegated colour. These two dancers seem to have devoted special attention to harmony and discretion. With a feeling for purity of line, they seek, both for themselves and for their partners, a wiry slenderness and a beauty of attitude, qualities not easily equalled.

Another side of their talent is their intense sense of the dramatic which is particularly evident in *Lune de sang* (which has affinities with *Romeo and Juliet*) and also in *Le Prisonnier a la roue*.

While preserving their great mastery of technique and their characteristic ardour and sincerity, they are influenced as much by the theatre, the mime, as, so far as Luisillo is concerned, by the classical dance; and their development will be interesting to watch.

The singer Maria Givo gives the show " pep," a little vulgar but necessary. The guitarist Angeligiesias once again demonstrates his sparkling virtuosity, even though it is not well exploited. Scenery and costumes are in excellent taste and of very high standard.

BALLETS DE PARIS

ROLAND PETIT, who seems to have separated from his usual partner, Renée Jeanmaire, plans to give a season of ballet at the Théâtre de l'Empire beginning March 11, 1953. The stars of his new company will be Colette Marchand, who is now working on the John Huston film, *Moulin Rouge*, and Nicole Amigues. He intends to stage six new ballets: first *Piège montée, ou l'Eau a la bouche*, music by Henri Sauguet; then *La P'tite dame en noir*, music by Maurice Thiriet, scenery by Antoni Clavé; *Le Loup*, scenario by Jean Anouilh and Georges Neveux, whose score is yet to be written; *Ciné-bijou*, by Pierre Petit, which will describe the life of a film actress, played by Colette Marchand; and *La Perle*, scenario by Louise de Vilmorin, music by Jean-Michel Damase. Also, Orson Welles is thinking of describing, to a score by Mozart, the adventures of a girl in a block of ice.

Three pictures of Ana Ricarda's La Tertulia for the de Cuevas company. Irène Lidova collaborated with Ricarda on the book. The music is by Manuel Infante and the designs by Caupletti.

Top, centre. Léon Grieg and George Golovine in English Dance. This sailor dance is popular in Spanish music hall. (Photo: Lido)

Above. The Clown and the Tightrope Walker. Jacqueline Mannachez and Danile Seillier. (Photo: Lipnitzki)

Right. Ana Ricarda as the Spanish Ballerina and her Mother, Frederick Steibler, in the dressing-room before the performance. (Photo: Lipnitzki)

Ballet Dates

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET
Jan. at Sadler's Wells Theatre
27 *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales, Reflection, Pineapple Poll*
31 (M) *Coppelia* (Lane, Trecu, Poole)
Feb.
2 *Les Sylphides, Reflection, The Great Detective*
7 (M) *Ile des Sirenes, Casse Noisette, The Great Detective*
Provincial Tour
9 Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon (two weeks)
23 Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton
Mar.
2 Opera House, Blackpool

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
Jan. at Covent Garden
29 *Lac des Cygnes* (Grey, Field)
30 *Ballet Imperial, Symphonic Variations, Apparitions*
31 (M) *Lac des Cygnes* (Act II), *Apparitions, Ballet Imperial*
Feb.
2 *Coppelia* (Lindsay, Vernon, White)
4 *Les Sylphides, Apparitions, Mam'zelle Angot*
7 (M) *Lac des Cygnes* (Grey, Field)
7 (E) *Lac des Cygnes* (Act II), *Les Patineurs, Symphonic Variations* (Shearer), *A Mirror for Witches*
9 *Giselle* (Elvin, Somes, Lindsay), *Bonne-Bouche*
12 *Giselle* (Shearer, Rassine, Drage), *Bonne-Bouche*
14 (M) *Giselle* (Elvin, Somes, Lindsay), *Les Patineurs*
16 *Giselle, Bonne-Bouche*
17 *Giselle, Bonne-Bouche*
18 *Ballet Imperial, Symphonic Variations, A Mirror for Witches*
19 *Ballet Imperial, Symphonic Variations, A Mirror for Witches*
20 *Sleeping Beauty*
21 (M and E) *Sleeping Beauty*
23 *Sleeping Beauty*
24 *Sleeping Beauty*
25 *Sleeping Beauty*
26 *Sleeping Beauty*
27 *Sleeping Beauty*
28 (M and E) *Sleeping Beauty*

INTERNATIONAL BALLET
Feb.
5 to 9 Theatre Massimo, Palermo
11 to 14 Reggio Emilia Theatre
16 to 18 Grand Theatre, Brescia
19 to 22 Theatre Guiseppe Verdi, Trieste
24 to 26 Theatre Alfieri, Milan
27 to Mar. 1 Casino Theatre, San Remo

Feb. **BALLET RAMBERT**
2 Arts Council tour of Scotland for two weeks
16 Town Hall, Lewisham
Mar.
2 Winter Gardens, Morecambe
9 Royalty Theatre, Chester

Feb. **CONTINENTAL BALLET**
2 Pavilion, Worthing
9 Playhouse, Kidderminster
Mar.
9 Hippodrome, Keighley

Feb. **FESTIVAL BALLET**
16 Gaiety, Dublin (two weeks)
Mar.
2 Grand Opera House, Belfast (two weeks)
16 Empire, Edinburgh (two weeks)
30 Alhambra, Glasgow (two weeks)
Apr.
13 New Theatre, Hull
20 Theatre Royal, Birmingham
27 Palace, Manchester (two weeks)
May
11 Theatre Royal, Bath
18 Empire, Liverpool
June
22 Pavilion, Bournemouth (two weeks)
July
9 Royal Festival Hall, London (two months)

Feb. **BALLET JOOSS**
16 Grand, Blackpool
23 Arts Theatre, Cambridge
Mar.
2 Pavilion, Bournemouth
16 Grand Theatre, Leeds
23 King's Theatre, Edinburgh
30 King's Theatre, Glasgow
Apr.
6 Sadler's Wells Theatre, London (three weeks)
May
Tour of Ireland

Ballet Correspondents

(Abbreviations: b.c.—ballet correspondence; m.—male; f.—female; m.a.—my age; o.i.—other interests; ls.—languages; p.r.—photograph requested)

DAVID GEORGE, of Hampstead, N.W.3 regrets that his name and address appeared in this column in January in error. All letters are being returned.

WALTER F. BURROWS, "Lyndhurst," Kirton Road, Trimley, Ipswich, Suffolk, wants b.c. m. or f. age 28-32 anywhere, m.a. 32, o.i. music, travel, photography, opera, records.

IRIS PIPER, 35 Charlton Road, Blackheath, S.E.3, wants b.c. m. age 21-26 in London and Canada, m.a. 19, o.i. music, dancing, opera, theatre, all answered.

PAULINE MAXWELL, 29 Crawthew Grove, East Dulwich, S.E.22, wants b.c. in Italy, m. or f. of Russian extraction (with knowledge of Russian language) anywhere, age 15-18, m.a. 15, o.i. travel, music, theatre, art, p.r., all answered.

PERCY DAVIS, 69 Orchard Street, Peterborough, Northants, wants b.c. m. in England, France, America, Belgium, Holland, Spain, m.a. 30, o.i. music, travel, sport, theatre.

PETER W. TRYUK, 94 Station Road, Scunthorpe, Lincs., wants b.c. f. age 21-28, m.a. 28, ls. English, Polish, German (not a very good knowledge of this language), o.i. travel, opera, music, ballroom dancing, cinema, tennis, p.r.

JULIA EMMETT, 2 Greene Fielde End, Laleham-on-Thames, Middx., wants b.c. m. or f. age 20-25 in Spain, ls. English and French, m.a. 20, o.i. Spain, correspondence, reading, films, sport, theatre, music (excluding jazz and chamber), p.r.

MARY E. HATCHER, 103 Salisbury Road, Totton, near Southampton, Hants, wants b.c., m. or f. age 14-17 anywhere. m.a. 14. o.i. records, skating, swimming. p.r.

ROBERT URWIN, Jnr., 4 Cambridge Terrace, High Clarence, near Middlesbrough, Yorks., wants b.c. any age. m.a. 22. o.i. animals, writing, travel. p.r., all answered.

MR. GINTER WIORA, 6/102 Christchurch Road, Tulse Hill, S.W.2, wants b.c., f., age 18-25, London or near. m.a. 30. o.i. music, theatre, reading. p.r.

LOOK FOR

ALICIA MARKOVA on the front cover of our March number on sale everywhere on February 25. Another famous international star will be on the back cover.

The issue will contain more pictures and opinions of new ballets from everywhere, including opinions of *The Great Detective* at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, and *L'Aiglon* at the Paris Opera. Anton Dolin writes about the ballet in *Limelight*. Another photographer will choose his favourite pictures. A new illustrated series of articles on ballet for beginners will start. Our *Dancers you will know* feature is to be resumed as also is our series on schools.

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As a special concession to men and women serving in Her Majesty's Armed Forces, subscriptions for copies of DANCE AND DANCERS to be posted to any Service address in the world will be accepted during Coronation Year at half the usual rates.

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The rates of H.M. Armed Forces at a Service address only during Coronation Year are:—10s. for one year's copies; 5s. for six months, post free. Please state date of first number required and post to:—The Publisher, DANCE AND DANCERS, 12 Phipps Mews, Eccleston Place, London, S.W.1. Subsequent changes of address should be notified seven days before publication.

FRANCE

continued from page 25

FRANCOISE ADRET has just created several ballets at the Amsterdam opera house: *Il Ritorno, Quatre mouvements*, and a new version of *Apollon musagète*, by Stravinsky, already given in Strasbourg. Youly Agaroff played Apollon, the three muses being Ethery Pagava and the Dutch dancers, Marguerite Golon and Lyd. Roland Casenave, who was for a long time in the Marquis de Cuevas's company, is *maître de ballet* there.

FOLLOWING the disbanding of part of the Opéra Comique ballet, several artistes have founded the *Ballets Populaires de Paris*. The new company includes Paul Goubé, Geneviève Kergrist, Maryelle Krempff and Yvonne Alexander.

IN December, Keita Fobeda and her African Ballet gave several performances at the Théâtre de l'Etoile. To the rhythm of tom-toms, guitars, and native instruments, dancing with furious bounds and screams, the company performed a series of dances of incantation, hunting dances, dances of the possessed—the heroic legend of Bigolo ending in the nightmarish procession of the fire-eaters. **Marie-Francoise Christout**

DENMARK

THE Royal Danish Ballet festival which has now become one of the most important events in the ballet year will take place at the Royal Theatre, Copenhag n, from May 25 to 30.

The Danish classics to be given this year are *Folk Legend, La Sylphide, Napoli* and *Kermess in Bruges*. Al by Bournonville. Galeotti's *Les Caprices du Cupidon* (the oldest ballet in a European repertoire).

The international works are Fokine's *Les Sylphides* and *Petrouchka*. Saint-Leon's *Coppelia*. Coralli's *Giselle*. Lichine's *Graduation Ball*.

Recent creations are Balanchine's *Symphony in C*, Borge Ralov's *La Courtisane* and Frank Schaufuss' *Idolon*.

A review, and photographs, of the recent productions by the Royal Danish Ballet will appear in our next issue.
Bent Schonberg

ELVIN IN MILAN

FOLLOWING in the wake of Ulanova, Fonteyn, Toumanova and Chauviré, Teatro alla Scala's latest acquisition has been Sadler's Wells ballerina Violetta Elvin. Invited here to dance during the first half of the season, her arrival was heralded by an unprecedented amount of publicity in all the Italian papers and magazines. Brought on partly by her connection with the Wells, whose Florence visit three years ago is still remembered as an event, and partly by the glamour of her Russian ballerina background.

Elvin's original plan was to only dance *Lac des Cygnes* and the ballerina in *Petrouchka*. On her arrival her success both as a dancer and person was so great that Victor de Sabata asked her to dance the ballet in *Macbeth* and invited the choreographer Milloss to create a part worthy of her technique. This was followed by Massine's ballet in *La Gioconda* and an invitation to stay on to dance in Balanchine's *Ballet Imperial*.

On New Year's Eve the Scala was unusually packed by a public anxious to see the second Sadler's Wells ballerina to perform in their theatre, dance *Lac*, Act II. Her performance was excellent and received a just ovation. As an old ballet master commented, "Elvin has the arms of Olga Spessivtzeva." This was followed by a good performance of the ballerina in Milloss's version of *Petrouchka*, which was particularly interesting as this was Elvin's first attempt at a principal *demi-charactere* role.

Elvin herself adores Italy and particularly the Scala. Every effort has been made to make her feel at home and she has been inundated with kindness. **Peter Dragadze**

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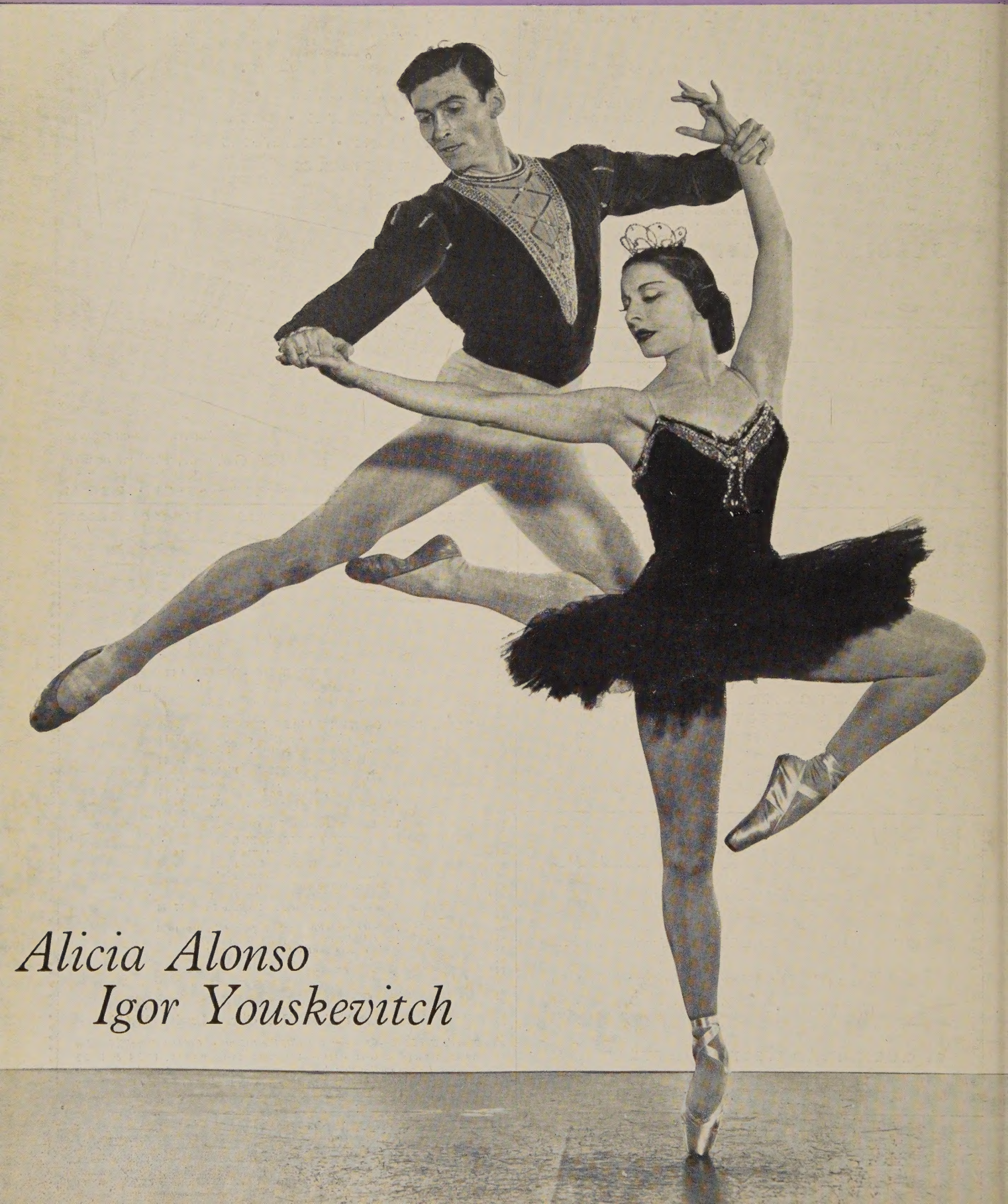

Alicia Alonso
Igor Youskevitch